3-for-1 Fossil Find a Windfall for Paleontologists - D-brief

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Discover the curious of the curious

Discover Magazine: The magazine of science, technology, and the future

By Nathaniel Scharping | September 7, 2016 1:12 pm

It's not often that paleontologists uncover a fossil that reveals what its dinner ate for dinner.



screen-shot-2016-09-07-at-12-04-53-pm

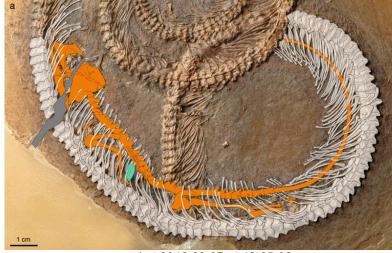
Working in Germany's Messel Pit, a prehistoric volcanic lake, researchers found an insect inside of a lizard inside of a snake (a snalizect?), all preserved for posterity in ancient sediment. It's essentially a prehistoric turducken, although not one you're likely to serve up at Thanksgiving dinner.

There's Levels Here

This particular example of fossil-ception let researchers peer into a 48-million year old food chain, and bolsters theories about the dining habits of this particular species of

snake, likely belonging to the genus *Paleopython*.

Much like their boa constrictor cousins, it was thought that these ancient snakes altered their dietary habits as they grew up, shifting from smaller lizards and amphibians to mammals, birds and other reptiles, according to *National Geographic*.



screen-shot-2016-09-07-at-12-05-00-pm

Finding this lizard, an extinct species of stem-basilisk, inside of a juvenile snake confirms that the species did indeed dine on smaller reptiles when they were young. The insect inside of the lizard evaded classification, although it's shimmering, iridescent shell was still visible. The researchers published their findings last month in the journal *Palaeobiodiversity and Palaeoenvironments*.

Area of Interest

The Messel Pit has yielded a number of

important finds over the years due to the excellent preservation of the fossils within. The pit was a volcanic lake during the Eocene epoch, some 56 to 34 million years ago. The lake was toxic at deeper levels, and creatures that swam too far down would perish and sink to the lake bed, where they were preserved for ages. Other notable fossils from the lake include bats and horses, as well as two turtles caught in the midst of love-making.

Researchers often peer into the digestive tracts of fossils to find out what they were munching on millions of years ago. Doing so provides important information on not only their diet, but their habits, range and role in the broader ecology of their time. It's not often that these fossilized snapshots encompass three trophic levels, however — the only other known instance is of a fish inside an amphibian inside a shark.

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upi.com



By Daniel Uria | Aug. 10, 2016 at 2:45 PM Follow @oddnewsupi



Batman, a 4-eared cat, was placed up for adoption in Pennsylvania after being treated for an unrelated illness. The Western Pennsylvania Humane Society said Batman is "very friendly" and would do well in most homes. Screen capture/Western PA Humane Society/Facebook

PITTSBURGH, Aug. 10 (UPI) -- A cat born with four ears due to a rare genetic mutation has been placed

up for adoption in Pennsylvania.

The Western PA Humane Society shared video of the 3-year-old cat, named Batman, who had not been previously available for adoption as he was being treated for an unrelated illness.

"As an open door shelter, we take in and care for any animal brought to us. Just when you think you've seen it all, a four eared cat comes in the door!" Managing Director of the Western PA Humane Society Hala Nuemah said. "We are excited Batman is feeling better and look forward to him finding his forever home."

Some believe the mutation, which has been documented back to 1938, is the result of a recessive gene passed on by both parents having four ears.

The Humane society described Batman as good tempered and said he would fit well in most homes.

"Batman would do well in a house with or without animals as he came from a house with several animals," they wrote. "He is a very friendly and love cheek rubs."

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upi.com

By Daniel Uria | Aug. 26, 2016 at 1:15 PM



An Australian prospector, who chose to remain anonymous, discovered an 8-pound gold nugget while searching a worked-over area with his metal detector. The nugget is valued at about \$190,000 USD and the prospector plans to split the earnings with his friends and use his share to buy a van to travel around Australia. Photo courtesy of Minelab

VICTORIA, Australia, Aug. 26 (UPI) -- An 8-pound gold nugget valued at about \$190,000 was discovered by a seasoned prospector in Australia.

According to metal detector manufacturing company Minelab, the anonymous prospector found the nugget while using his metal detector in a worked-over area in the far southern edge of Central Victoria's Golden

Triangle.

"I thought it was rubbish at first, maybe an old horseshoe," the prospector said. "About 12 inches below the ground, I could just barely make out the top of something. As I began to scrape away the clay and dig deeper, I really couldn't believe my eyes - this wasn't an old piece of steel in front of me. I had just unearthed a colossal gold nugget - a once in a lifetime find! I was in total disbelief as I didn't think nuggets of this size were still around"

The man had previously made a promise to split any large finds with his prospecting friends and plans to buy a van to travel across Australia with his share of the proceeds.

The nugget dubbed "Friday's Joy" was sent to a bank vault where plans to have a replica have been made as the original is prepared for auction.

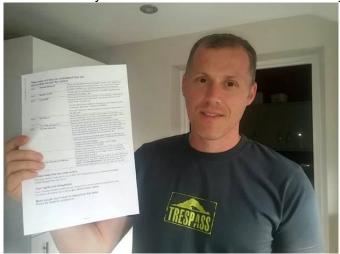
While Minelab was happy one of their customers was able to come up with such a rare find, Rita Bentley from the Prospectors and Miners Association told ABC Online the discovery would likely lead to an increase in local prospectors.

"I would imagine there will be some new people who thought 'I've always wanted to try that', and this will be what pushes them over the edge, buy a miner's right and get out there," Bentley said. "I imagine there'll be a mini gold rush going on."

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Richard Hartley-Parkinson for Metro.co.ukWednesday 10 Aug 2016 11:50 am



Rail worker told he faces possible £14,301,369,864,489 tax bill

Giles Hembrough got his tax code changed and it wasn't comfortable reading (Picture: SWNS)

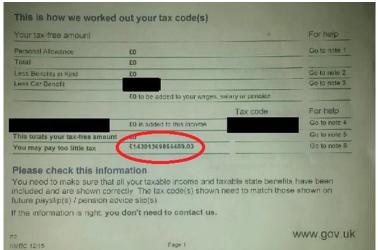
A railway worker has been left in a financial pickle after he was sent a tax coding notice for £14 trillion.

Giles Hembrough received notice telling him he may pay too little tax to the tune of the 14-figure sum when he got home from the pub and was told his tax code was changing.

The letter from HMRC said: 'We think the amount you owe HMRC is £14,301,369,864,489.03.

'We will let you know if this amount is right when we look at your tax return for the year.'

Mr Hembrough said: 'I have had lots of tax errors recently so I thought it was just an update.



No one likes to pay tax, but one Bristol worker received a bank-breaking shock when the government tried to charge him £14 TRILLION in income tax ñ more than the net worth of the entire US economy. See SWNS story SWTAX. Giles Hembrough discovered the eye-watering mistake when he opened an ominous 'When she opened my file she said "Oh that is a big brown envelope from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) after returning from the pub last weekend.

He's been told he didn't pay enough tax (Picture: SWNS)

'When I noticed the figure at the bottom I had to do a double take. I was incredibly surprised of course it was such a big number.'

HMRC was very keen to stress that it wasn't a bill and that it was just a change of tax code.

If it did come through as a bill he could end up paying it in monthly instalments of £1.2trillion a month – or keep paying it at his current tax rate over the next 369million years.

He added: 'I gave HMRC a ring and said to the woman that I thought my code was wrong.

amount it looks like someone has fallen asleep on the keyboard".'

Mr Hembrough is hoping that his tax code has returned to normal and is enjoying sharing the story with his friends and family.

'I have been showing it round,' he added, 'Most people just find it really funny. I will be checking my pay check closely though next month.'

A spokesman for HMRC said: 'When we let a customer down, we always apologise and put matters right.'

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Thieves break into a garden and steal a 30ft HEDGE!

13:06 EST, 29 August 2016 | dailymail.co.uk



Tuesday, Aug 30th 2016 8AM **82°F** 11AM **91°F** 5-Day Forecast

Bush bandits strike again! Garden gang 'steal a second hedge just 30 miles away from their first night raid'

- Anthony and Daphne Hawley, from West Sussex, were left out of pocket
- Twenty five 6ft tall laurel hedges were stolen from their front garden
- The pensioner couple will now need to pay around £750 to replace them
- Second couple awoke this morning to find their hedge was also stolen
- Spokeswoman for Sussex Police has confirmed that they are investigating

By Harvey Day For Mailonline

A second couple have woken up to find their hedge dug up and stolen just 30 miles from the first incident of shrub theft.

Peter and Julie Vine, of Wrotham in Kent, spent £1,300 on a line of 127 shrubs to blot out road noise - but overnight all of their beloved trees were stolen.

Meanwhile over the weekend pensioners Anthony and Daphne Hawley, who live just 30 miles away in Copthorne, West Sussex, woke to find their hedge of 25 laurels worth £750 had also been snatched.



Peter and Julie Vine, of Wrotham in Kent, spent £1,300 on a line of 127 shrubs to blot out road noise - but overnight all of their beloved trees were stolen

A second couple have woken up to find their hedge dug up and stolen by midnight shrub-robbers just 30 miles from the first incident

The two raids have raised fears that a shrubbery gang is roaming the south of England at night, looking for suitable hedges to steal from front gardens.

Mr and Mrs Vine had enjoyed a few months of quiet after planting the shrub screen to blot out traffic noise.

But today they told how they woke to that familiar roar of traffic after thieves sneaked into the garden under the cover of darkness and stolen the lot.

'To do a theft like that on a main road is just bizarre' said Mr Vine, 57, as he and wife Julie, 52, surveyed their barren garden.



'We are right on the border of the A227 and I just cannot believe it - for someone to take 127 trees takes time.

Anthony and Daphne Hawley have been left hundreds of pounds out of pocket, after thieves made off with the entire laurel hedge from their front garden - about 25 bushes all around 6ft tall (pictured after the theft)

The couple, from Copthorne, West Sussex, woke up one morning to find that their neatly-pruned hedge had been stolen while they slept

'You've got to pull them out, load them onto the back of something, and I have to ask what is the point of doing something like that.

'At three foot high they cost me about £1,300, and they were planted in May, so they've been there for some time.

'We planted them as a screen to stop the noise of the traffic, which can be really loud at times.'

Neighbours reported hearing people talking outside at around 2.30am. A Kent Police spokesman said 'Inquiries into this are ongoing.'

Over in Copthorne, the Hawleys are still bemused by the theft of their 30ft-long hedge.

Echoing Mr Vine's thoughts, Mr Hawley, 75, said: 'I can't believe someone would go to the trouble of stealing an entire hedge.

Mr Hawley, 75, said he was completely stunned to find that someone would go to the trouble of stealing an entire hedge

'We live on a private estate and they were planted about two years ago and were about six foot high.

'We woke up and everything had just been taken during the night.

'We never heard anything and when we checked our CCTV cameras they didn't show anything either.

You can see quite clearly where they have been dug up and you can also see tyre tracks on the road outside. Whoever did it knew what they were doing.

'I had noticed about a week ago that one of the laurels was looking really loose in the ground, but I didn't think anything of it.

'Whoever it was they must have needed a large truck, because 25 laurels certainly aren't small things. They probably cost about £25 each and now we are looking at needing to pay £750 to replace them.'

He said: 'They have only been planted for two years and they were about six foot high'



A spokeswoman for Sussex Police has confirmed that they are investigating the incident

Comments (



yeti68, northants, United Kingdom, less than a minute ago

An 80 year old man is missing after his dog walks home from the fields alone and the police tell us its nothing to do with them. A few greens go missing and there is a investigation that has a spokesperson to the media.

Ladya, Amsterdam, about a minute ago

Bush Bandit sounds like a lady shave

Elle, Chesterfield, United Kingdom, 4 minutes ago

Hedge your bets on who'll be the next victim!

Your Father, Castle Greyskull, United Kingdom, 6 minutes ago

People really will steal anything these days

Peconet009, Oulu, 7 minutes ago

""A Kent Police spokesman said 'Inquiries into this are ongoing". Meaning, "we are not going to beat around the Bush".Peace out.

nj1, DPR Of Scotchland, United Kingdom, 10 minutes ago

We all know who did it down that way... They live in white houses with two wheels...

Jezzle, Leeds, 13 minutes ago

Daylight (or rather, nighttime) shrubbery.

Anthony, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, 13 minutes ago

....so police is beating the bushes trying to solve the case?

Brian, London, United Kingdom, 9 minutes ago

That would be Special Branch.

Anthony, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, about a minute ago

@Brian, Special Branch on Bush Patrol?

virgigirl, Florence, 16 minutes ago

Take a trip around the area and see if anyone has just put in a laurel hedge...

escape the EU, Upper Halliford, United Kingdom, 21 minutes ago

Must be a clearance of everything in the UK before brexit, to take back to their countries. Oops! Hang on a minute, Theresa May will give them all passports to stay, along with everything they have taken

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Veteran female pickpocket can't break herself of the habit japantoday.com

KuchikomiAug. 07, 2016 - 06:00AM JST

TOKYO —

The current (Aug issue) of Shincho 45 features a story by photographer Kaori Inbe about an elderly female recidivist who made a specialty of pocket- and purse-picking in the food sections of department stores.

Now 83, Chika Sato-baba ("Auntie Sato, the basement thief"), boasts an impressively long rap sheet, having been arrested no fewer than 27 times. The tiny woman, who stands only about 140 centimeters tall, has spent nearly 30 years of her life behind bars. Over the past 10 years alone, she's been sentenced to three terms, for five years and 10 months in total.

It is uncertain as to whether Sato Kamiyama had gone straight since August 28, 2013, her release from her previous incarceration. But on March 18 of this year, she was nabbed red-handed in Ueno Station after removing a wallet from a female shopper's handbag.

On that day, she had taken the train from her home in Tokyo's Nakano Ward to a clinic in Arakawa Ward. The hospital was not open that day, so she took the Joban line to Ueno and left the station for the nearby "Ameya Yokocho" shopping street. Unaware that a patrolman had observed her walking about in what appeared to be a suspicious manner and had begun tailing her, she targeted a female mark and followed her onto the concourse of Ueno station, where a sale of products from Tochigi Prefecture was under way.

Using a leopard-print scarf to conceal her hand movements, Kamiyama extracted a wallet from the woman's bag. The police officer, having seen the whole thing go down, arrested Kamiyama on the spot.

The mark's wallet was found to contain 4,015 yen, six gift coupons and credit cards. Normally Kamiyama would have only taken the cash and then discarded the wallet.

It's no justification for her behavior, but Kamiyama went through some rough times in her youth. She was born in Tokyo's present-day Koto Ward on July 7, 1932, and was 13 years old when that portion of the city was leveled in the March 1945 firebombing. At age 18 she began working in a snack establishment but a year later acquired pocket-picking techniques and embarked on a life of crime that has continued to this day. She married and gave birth to one son and one daughter, but subsequently divorced.

Kamiyama however, is not without means of support. In fact, her monthly income from rents and other sources is at least 260,000 yen.

In 1968, she took out a 20 million yen loan to purchase a apartment building in Nakano Ward. The apartment underwent renovation in 1992, and her son and his family reside in one of the units. The outstanding balance was settled in 2012, while she was serving a prison term.

The transcript from her 19th trial includes the following exchanges:

Prosecuting attorney: "During your prison sentence, did you make up your mind not to engage in pocket picking an more?"

Kamiyama: "Yes, I was thinking that I absolutely would never put my hands on another person's property."

P: "We were told by your family that they would not let you go out alone."

K: "Yes. They locked me in the house."

P: "Weren't you thinking of your family when you stole something this time?"

K: "No, I didn't." (Uses a handkerchief to wipe away tears.)

Then she was directly questioned by the judge.

Judge: "Why do you think you keep repeating these things?" Kamiyama: "I thought about it, but gave up."

J: "When you are about to steal something, don't you stop out of consideration for the victim?"

K: "It's a bad thing to do to the victim."

J: "So why do you do it then?"

K: "I give up, it's hopeless."

J: "This is a terrible thing to do to people. Don't you ever think about how bad it is?"

K: "I did think about it, but I gave up."

J: "Why?"

K: (No reply.)

"In some ways, habitual female pocket pickers are seeking the same kind of thrill as do people who purchase expensive items on credit," says Manabu Saito, a physician who specializes in treating various forms of addiction. "It doesn't matter if they are well off themselves. They live for the thrill of the hunt, and don't have any perception that they're committing a crime. They are more sensitive to human emotions than other people and feel a desire to gratify their sense of loneliness.

"But it takes amazing ability to enjoy pocket picking at age 83. The only way to make her stop is through closer human relationships."

For her "habitual criminal acts," the judge sentenced Kamiyama to serve a term of two years and six months. "This will really be your last time," he said. "In the future, don't do it anymore."

She returned to her seat in silence.

Japan Today

11 Comments

inkochiAug. 06, 2016 - 10:05AM JST

First time I have seen cross-examination transcript presented so nonchalantly in English in Japan, even though it is largely translation from Shincho 45

It does sound like another person's smoking, setting fire to buildings or some other bad habit could easily be substituted for pickpocketing in this scenario

SimondBAug. 06, 2016 - 10:12AM JST

Funny how some woman get a thrill from crime. Many years ago I was in a relationship with a woman in an executive position in an medium to large sized company. She met me for lunch one day and seemed really buzzing. After some chat she pulled out from her handbag and showed me her trophy - a pair of fancy panties she had shoplifted that morning from a well known High Street store. And she was on a real high about it. She went on to be a three term MP and 3 years as a cabinet minister.

seadog538Aug. 06, 2016 - 10:24AM JST

An 83 year old female suri----she should be offered a job at the Police Academy teaching Police(both budding and veteran)the tricks of her trade! What stories she could tell!

sensei258Aug. 06, 2016 - 10:50AM JST

It's no justification for her behavior, but Kamiyama went through some rough times in her youth. She was born in Tokyo's present-day Koto Ward on July 7, 1932, and was 13 years old when that portion of the city was leveled in the March 1945 firebombing

Then why mention it at all? Maybe the defense team brought it up at trial so the judge would feel sorry for her

Laptop WarriorAug. 06, 2016 - 11:44AM JST

I think imprisoning a non-violent 83-year-old offender who is clearly beyond hope of rehabilitation is probably the wrong solution. Doesn't Japan's criminal justice system have more constructive ways to deal with people like Kamiyama?

TamaramaAug. 06, 2016 - 02:05PM JST

Fascinating story! 83 and still in the game. It must be a compulsion for her, she obviously can't resist. Good work from that policeman by the way.

HollisBrownAug. 06, 2016 - 07:26PM JST

She keeps doing it and the courts keep sending her to prison. There's no suggestion in this story that she's ever been sent for counseling, or to someone like Manabu Saito - the physician quoted at the end of the article who specializes in treating various forms of addiction.

From the evidence presented in the court transcripts, it seems that the only 'help' this lady is getting is the judge asking her to question her actions, and consider the feelings of the victim. I don't need my Masters in Criminal Psychology to tell me that's never going to be an effective solution. It beggars belief actually, that after the history this lady has had, that was how the judge chose to deal with her.

And as for the police officer tailing her because she was acting suspiciously, although he did catch her in the act, I have to question why he didn't stop her and prevent the crime from taking place. I'm presuming here that he knew who she was as surely her previous history meant she was well known to all the local police. If the police officer knew who she was and that was one reason he started tailing her, he could have stopped her, made it known she had been spotted, and had a chat to make sure she was thinking straight - 'don't do this to your family again' etc.

Maybe the Japanese police aren't interested in preventing crime - just prosecuting?

MariaAug. 08, 2016 - 08:44AM JST

The need to hoard, among those who lived through times of war and poverty, is documented, I believe. People feel the need to stockpile food, valuables and other items so as not to go without again.

Developing habits to relieve feelings of extreme anxiety and stress is common too, and these habits are difficult to undo. I can't say I feel anything but sympathy and efforts at understanding, for this woman. Has counselling ever been offered as a solution?

• MrBumAug. 08, 2016 - 09:55AM JST

Maria,

Not only that, they say hoarding and other mental disorders like OCD might be remnants of human evolution. Those habits were useful and desirable traits in our hunter and gatherer days, but are no longer necessary in modern life.

• FightingVikingAug. 08, 2016 - 07:34PM JST

@SimondB

After some chat she pulled out from her handbag and showed me her trophy - a pair of fancy panties she had shoplifted that morning from a well known High Street store. And she was on a real high about it. She went on to be a three term MP and 3 years as a cabinet minister.

So now we know how they become MPs and cabinet ministers... Maybe also here in Japan?

dogzAug. 09, 2016 - 01:49PM JST

SimondBAug. 06, 2016 - 10:12AM JST

Funny how some woman get a thrill from crime. Many years ago I was in a relationship with a woman in an executive position in an medium to large sized company. She met me for lunch one day and seemed really buzzing. After some chat she pulled out from her handbag and showed me her trophy - a pair of fancy panties she had shoplifted that morning from a well known High Street store. And she was on a real high about it. She went on to be a three term MP and 3 years as a cabinet minister

Is your ex Takako Doi?

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105-year-old just had one birthday wish - a visit from a hot fireman

metro.co.uk

Alison Lynch for Metro.co.ukThursday 18 Aug 2016 12:08 pm



105-year-old just had one birthday wish - a visit from a hot fireman

Ivy gets her burly fireman bearing cake (Picture: NCJ Media)

At the age of 105, Ivena Smailes knows what she wants.

And what she wants is a hot fireman with tattoos to bring her cake.

Fair enough.

Ivena, who is known locally as 'Aunty Ivy', celebrated her 105th birthday on Wednesday (August 17 – she's a feisty Leo, obviously) at the Addison Court Care Home in Wesley

Grove, Crawcrook, with her family, including daughter Jane, and friends.

Her birthday wish was fulfilled when a burly fireman from the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service climbed through her third floor window and delivered her Victoria sponge cake.



(Picture: NCJ Media)

'Ivena's been with us for three years now, and she's got a fantastic sense of humour, just look at her party today,' care home worker Debra Carter said.

'On her bucket list this year she wanted a cake delivered by a fireman with tattoos. We've managed to find one and the fire brigade have been fantastic about it; they were arguing over who was going to climb the ladder and deliver it to her.

'For her birthday last year she tried to get us to climb a tree. She always tries to find something we can't do.'

Ivy didn't just get one fireman though – the whole crew came along to enjoy her birthday buffet.

(Picture: NCJ Media)

It's fair to say the birthday girl, who was born in 1911 and has lived through two world wars, had a great time.

(Picture: NCJ Media)

'No one would believe she's 105, she doesn't look it and she's got a fantastic sense of humour. She even had her first selfie today to celebrate,' said Debra.

Yep, we bet Ivy's got some stories to tell.





105 year-old has birthday cake delivered by fireman © 2016 Associated **Newspapers Limited** Back to top



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145-year-old is the new world's oldest man but says he's ready to die

20:46, 26 Aug 2016 Updated 20:47, 26 Aug 2016 By Laura Connor

mirror.co.uk



The world's oldest man has been named as an Indonesian who is believed to be a staggering 145-years-old – but who wants to die.

Mbah Gotho has emerged from obscurity with documentation recognised by Indonesian officials revealing he was born on December 31, 1870.

He has outlived all 10 of his siblings as well as his four wives, the last of

whom died in 1988.

All of his children have also died, and now he is survived by his grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren.

If correct, that makes him significantly older than the verified oldest person in the world ever, a title that belongs to French woman Jeanne Calment, who lived to be 122.



CEN

Mbah Gotho, an Indonesian man who is believed to be 145-years-old

The super-senior citizen from Sragen, Central Java, was recently interviewed by regional reporters, and he said he has been through it all and would not mind passing on.

"What I want is to die," he said. "My grandchildren are all independent."

Suryanto, Mbah's grandson, said his grandfather has been preparing for his death ever since he was 122, but it never seemed to

come.

He said: "The gravestone there was made in 1992. That was 24 years ago."

Official documentation revealing Mbah's impressive age

In addition, Suryanto said Mbah's family has already prepared a gravesite for him - near his children's graves.

Staff at the Indonesian records office say they have confirmed Mbah's birthdate, which is specified on his Indonesian ID card as December 31, 1870.



Whether or not he will ever be listed as the world's oldest man however is open to question, as the paperwork has so far not been independently verified.

Mbah is waiting to see whether he will be listed as the oldest person ever He says he is ready to die though

If so he will join to others without verifiable records who are purportedly older than Mbah - 171-year-old James Olofintuyi from Nigeria and 163-year-old Dhaqabo Ebba from Ethiopia.

These days, his grandchildren say Mbah mostly sits listening to the radio because his eyesight is too poor to watch television.

For the past three months, he has had to be spoon-fed and bathed as he has become increasingly frail.

When asked what his secret to longevity is, Mbah replied: "The recipe is just patience."

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Kansas home wound up with 600 million IP addresses and a world of trouble denverpost.com



By The Washington Post PUBLISHED: August 10, 2016 at 10:51 pm | UPDATED: August 11, 2016 at 10:41 am

A two-hour drive from the geographic center of the United States sits a quiet farmhouse near Potwin, Kansas. Joyce Vogelman Taylor's grandfather built the house in 1902, and her father spent 85 years living in it.

She remembered a moment in 1942 — the end of World War II not yet in sight — when he purchased a Delco electric generator,

light bulbs and a toaster. It was a massive technological upgrade for the house.

More than 70 years later, technology made the 82-year-old's life — and those of her renters James and Theresa Arnold — a digital age horror story.

For reasons soon to be explained, the little house in the center of the country became the crossroads of the Internet, with unimaginable consequences, also soon to be explained.

The discovery was made by Kashmir Hill of Fusion who broke the story in April.

Last week, the Arnolds filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for Kansas against MaxMind, a digital company that maps IP addresses and who the Arnolds claim is responsible for turning their pastoral home into a digital age horror story.

The first time Taylor realized something was amiss was when she received a call in 2011 from a small business owner who angrily blamed her for his customers' email problems.

The conversation shocked Taylor. She owned a Gateway computer, which she used almost like a typewriter — for composing Sunday school lessons and letters. She barely browsed the Internet, much less used it to overload a small business's email servers.

"The first call I got was from Connecticut," Taylor told Fusion. "It was a man who was furious because his business internet was overwhelmed with emails. His customers couldn't use their email. He said it was the fault of the address at the farm. That's when I became aware that something was going on."

After that initial strange call to Taylor, complaints started pouring in, often with distressing and sometimes criminal accusations aimed at the Arnolds, the Wichita Eagle reported.

In May 2011 police and sheriff's officers knocked on their door, looking for a stolen truck.

"This scenario repeated itself countless times over the next five years," the lawsuit stated.

Officers would show up, accusing them of harboring runaway children. Of keeping girls in the house to make pornographic films. Ambulances appeared, prepared to save suicidal persons. FBI agents, federal marshals and IRS collectors have all appeared on their doorstep. So have angry Internet users, who claimed they were ripped off by the Arnolds.

"Law enforcement officials came to the residence all hours of the day or night," the lawsuit stated.

At least once, the Arnolds were doxxed, meaning hackers posted their names and personal details across the Internet, Fusion reported.

One day, a broken toilet was left in the driveway without explanation.

Neither the Arnolds nor Taylor had any idea of what was happening.

The genesis of what actually happened was 2002, when a company called MaxMind was founded. It maps IP addresses, a notoriously unreliable practice. Many can't be directly linked to an address, only a state or even a country.

For its tech to work, MaxMind matched each IP address to a set of coordinates. This presented a problem when the company didn't have an exact location.

Sometimes, it could only determine than an IP address was in the U.S. In those cases, the company mapped that address to a specific set of coordinates: 38(degree)N 97(degree)W or, in the parlance of digital maps, 38.0000,-97.0000.

That just happens to be the front yard of the house where the Arnolds resided.

More than 600 million IP addresses were mapped to that yard.

And no one connected with the farmhouse knew this until Fusion's Hill, who had been investigating the practice of mapping IP addresses, searched through MaxMind's database, discovered the 600 million IP addresses at the Kansas location and gave Taylor, the owner, a call.

Mapping the digital world

To fully understand what happened, it's important to understand how Internet protocol addresses colloquially IP addresses — work.

Most devices we use are connected to a network via Internet protocol. To do so, it requires an IP address. Thus every smartphone, computer, laptop, tablet and anything else that connects to the Internet has one.

The IP address' primary purpose is to allow these devices to interact with one another. But the IP address of your personal computer is generally not seen by other devices.

Instead, that IP address is used to connect to a router, which then uses its own specific IP address to connect to the Internet.

Sometimes, that can mean your IP address is linked to just you (e.g. if you live alone and use a personal, password-protected wireless router). It can also mean that your IP address is shared by many (e.g. every user connecting to the wireless Internet at a coffee shop or in an office likely displays the same IP address).

Since networks can span buildings, blocks or even cities (in the case of public WiFi), it's not always simple to pin down the exact geographical address of an IP address. (The term "address" in IP address is a bit of a misnomer in that regard.)

Add in the fact that there are readily available, free programs that can mask IP addresses, and mapping them becomes an even murkier proposition.

Sometimes, MaxMind could only get information linking an IP address to the country.

The reason why it chose the Arnolds' front yard as its "default location" in those instances is another can of worms. It was going to map them to the geographic center of the U.S. That translates awkwardly into digital parlance, though, so the number was rounded off to 38(degree)N 97(degree)W.

One blogger created a heatmap of Internet usage in the U.S. according to MaxMind's data from April 2011. Most might be shocked to find that Potwin, Kansas, is responsible for more Web usage than even New York City or Silicon Valley.

"The default location in Kansas was chosen over ten years ago when the company was started," MaxMind's co-founder Thomas Mather told Fusion. "At that time, we picked a latitude and longitude that was in the center of the country, and it didn't occur to us that people would use the database to attempt to locate people down to a household level. We have always advertised the database as determining the location down to a city or zip code level. To my knowledge, we have never claimed that our database could be used to locate a household."

Law enforcement and IP addresses

Though it's not always possible to perfectly locate IP addresses, they're often used (imperfectly) in different ways, from tracking analytics to advertising firms attempting to geotarget potential customers to record labels sending cease-and-desist letters to pirates.

Law enforcement also often uses IP addresses to link users to certain devices. A Montgomery County, Md., school bus driver was dismissed in 2011 after authorities linked him to an IP address that had downloaded child pornography. And, in February, a 12-year-old from Fairfax, Va., was charged with threatening her school after posting an Instagram message of a gun, bomb and a knife.

Again, though, it's an inexact science. Many argue that IP addresses should not be used as any sort of evidence (particularly since adept digital criminals can mask them, which is likely what happened in more than of the cases that led police to the Arnolds' door).

Following Hill's extraordinary piece in Fusion, MaxMind shifted its default "United States" location to the center of a lake, west of Wichita.

Users have to update their database for the shift to take effect, but the nightmare, in effect, was over for the Arnolds.

That wasn't quite enough for the family, though, who filed a lawsuit Friday seeking "compensatory and punitive damages in excess of \$75,000," "plus their costs."

"My clients have been through digital hell," the Arnolds' attorney Randall Rathbun told The Guardian. "The most vile accusations have been made against them – such as that they've been involved in child pornography. What impact would it have on your life if someone accused you of being in child pornography? Obviously it's horrendous."

MaxMind has not commented on the lawsuit.

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Danish amateur finds 1000-year-old Viking amulet

thelocal.dk

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The Local



Danish amateur finds 1000-year-old Viking amulet

The Local · 5 Aug 2016, 23:22

Published: 05 Aug 2016 23:22

GMT+02:00

A Danish metal detecting enthusiast has discovered a 1,000year-old Viking amulet thought to be related to the Norse god Odin, a find archeologists called "incredibly exciting and rare".

Amateur archeologist Torben Christjansen, who has devoted about

300 hours to his hobby, made the find in a field in Nybølle, just outside Copenhagen.

At first he didn't know that the silver amulet, which depicts a throne with two ravens on the backrest, was a Viking age jewellery.

It was only when he posted it up on an archeological finding that its importance was recognised.

"This is an incredibly exciting and rare find. We only know of two similar amulets," Anders Rasmussen, curator of the Museum Lolland-Falster told TV2 Denmark.

According to Peter Pentz, a Viking expert at the Danish National Museum, fewer than 20 chair amulets have been found in Scandinavia.

He said the ravens probably depicted Huginn and Muninn, the two ravens of the Norse God Odin, which mean respectively "thought" and "memory", and who are tasked with flying all over the world to keep Odin informed.

"It is fantastic," Christjansen said. "There have only been three like this found here in Denmark. After this discovery, I think right, I'm going out to look twice."

Christjansen is now required by law to send the amulet to the National Museum for analysis.

Metal detectorists have been behind some of Denmark's most spectacular recent finds, in March discovering a 1,100 year old gold crucifix that is thought to be the oldest complete Christian artefact ever found in the country.

The Local Europe AB Östgötagatan 12 116 25 Stockholm Sweden

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Pennsylvania supermarket sells wine, a 1st since Prohibition

August 19, 2016 yahoo.com

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Officials say a grocery store in Pennsylvania has become the first supermarket since Prohibition to sell wine in the state.

A Giant Eagle store in suburban Pittsburgh began selling wine Friday. Only state-owned liquor stores or kiosks had been allowed to sell wine since the nationwide constitutional ban on alcohol that lasted from 1920 to 1933.

Under a new law, customers can buy up to 3 liters of wine to go from businesses that hold restaurant or hotel liquor licenses.

The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board says it has approved more than 80 supermarkets, restaurants and hotels to sell wine to go. The licenses became active this week, and sales also began at sub shops and eateries, including Big Woody's in Allentown and Super Sub & Six Pak's in Dubois.

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The hunt for the Tudor hitman

Monday 15th August 2016 historyextra.com

BBC History Magazine



In 1536, a London merchant was gunned down with a lethal new weapon in a killing that bore all the hallmarks of a professional 'hit'. But who pulled the trigger, and why? Derek Wilson investigates...

This article was first published in the June 2014 issue of BBC History Magazine



A contemporary illustration shows a man firing a gun. In 1530s England, the arquebus was the only firearm in general use – yet it was way too cumbersome to be the weapon employed in Robert Packington's murder. © Mercer's Company

At around 6am on Monday 13 November 1536, Robert Packington left his house in London's Cheapside – or just around the corner in Sopers Lane – to attend early Mass in the Mercers' Chapel on the north side of West Cheap. His journey was a short one but, in all likelihood, Packington carried a lantern: the night was dark and smoke from a thousand chimneys, mingling with a mist from the Thames, reduced visibility to a few paces.

Packington's route took him past the Great Conduit, a square building in the middle of Cheapside containing the fountain that provided the nearby houses with their water supply. As he crossed the thoroughfare, only

a few metres from his destination, a single shot rang out and he fell dead upon the instant.

Almost as soon as Packington's body hit the floor, the crowd that rapidly gathered around his corpse was asking questions. Why would someone want to eliminate one of London's most respectable figures – Packington was not only a prominent merchant, and a leading light in the Worshipful Mercers' Company, but also a member of parliament. Why did the assassin select such a busy part of London – a daily gathering point for unemployed men hoping to be hired as day labourers – to commit the crime?

And why did no one notice the gunman or his weapon? The only firearms in general use at the time were matchlock arquebuses – and these were hardly tailor-made for assassins wishing to carry out a swift, surgical strike. Arquebuses were more than a metre long and had to be held using both hands. The powder was ignited by means of a glowing match which would show up in the dark.

Even in the gloom of that November pre-dawn, anyone carrying, let alone using, such an unwieldy firearm would have attracted attention. Yet this assassin, apparently, stood a mere matter of yards from a crowd, put the gun to his shoulder, and pulled the trigger. There was a flash and an explosion. And yet no one saw him.

A wheellock pistol, the lethal new weapon used in a 1536 killing that seemed to be a professional 'hit'. © Bridgeman



A wheellock pistol, the lethal new weapon used in a 1536 killing that seemed to be a professional 'hit' © Bridgeman

The reason that the murderer was able to melt into the darkness was, as it transpires, that he wasn't using an arquebus at all, but the much smaller, more discreet wheellock pistol. In fact, poor Robert Packington probably holds the dubious distinction of being the first person in England to be killed with a handgun.

By the time the autumn sun had dispelled the early mist, the shocking news of the merchant's murder was all over town. And, by now, one more question was on everyone's lips – and, four days later, that question was still unanswered. Writing to his master, Viscount Lisle, in Calais, Francis Hall reported: "The murderer that slew Mr Packington with a gun in Cheapside cannot be yet known." Despite the offer of a large

reward by the lord mayor, no one was brought to book for the crime.

But this did not mean that there were no suspicions. John Bale, the Protestant controversialist, writing a decade later, was sure that the instigators of the killing were the Catholic bishops – the "byfurked ordinaries". Soon Edward Hall's history of England from the reigns of Henry IV to Henry VIII – the *Union of the Two Illustre Families of Lancaster and York* (commonly called *Hall's Chronicle*) – was on the bookstalls, containing a more detailed account of the incident. It added that because Packington had denounced "the covetousness and cruelty of the clergy" it was most likely that "by one of them [he was] thus shamefully murdered".

Cruelty of the clergy

By the time Foxe wrote his *Acts and Monuments of the Christian Religion* (commonly known as the *Book of Martyrs* – first Latin edition 1559) specific perpetrators were in the frame.

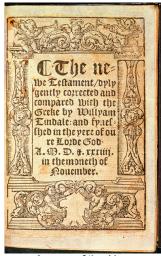
But before we come onto those, we should consider the background to the murder. The year 1536 was an annus horribilis, the most tense and turbulent of Henry VIII's reign.

The first ominous event was the death, in January, of Catharine of Aragon, the former queen, still much loved by many of Henry's subjects. Scarcely had the memory of her passing begun to fade when news came that the king's second wife, Anne Boleyn, had been arrested and was going to be executed.

A copy of the New Testament translated into English by William Tyndale. Was Robert Packington targeted because he smuggled this banned text into England? © Bridgeman

Few mourned the death of the 'French whore' but many were troubled by the manner of her demise. The king had done so many terrible things, including making himself pope in England. What might he do next?

The answer was: begin dismantling the fabric of the nation's religion by closing the smaller monasteries. Government preachers were put up in the pulpits to denounce Catholic practices. In response, bold spirits stood up in other churches to attack the 'heretics' now exercising power over the king – particularly Thomas Cromwell, Henry's closest adviser, and archbishop Thomas Cranmer.



A copy of the New
Testament translated into
English by William Tyndale.
Was Robert Packington
targeted because he
smuggled this banned text
into England? © Bridgeman

A rabid pamphlet war broke out between traditionalist and reformist parties. Neighbour accused neighbour of being a 'papist' or a 'heretic'. There was widespread fear that insults would give way to violence. Cromwell even ordered that all priests must surrender any weapons they possessed.

Then, in October, the looming storm broke. News reached London that men in the Midlands and the north had risen in revolt against religious change and would soon be marching south. Henry and his court shut themselves up in Windsor Castle. Citizens feared that blood would soon be running in their streets. And so it was.

But why was it Robert Packington's? A clue surely lies in the fact that he was a senior member of the Mercers' Company, had studied at the Inns of Court and regularly sat at the House of Commons.

Now, if any Londoners resented the power of the clergy, it was the city's merchants, lawyers and parliamentarians. Packington was an outspoken critic. But, in all probability, he was more – an evangelical activist engaged in smuggling William Tyndale's banned translation of the New Testament and

other heretical books into England. He was also, it seems, an associate of Cromwell, and carried messages between the minister and evangelical activists in Antwerp.

So, when Packington was brutally murdered few people were in any doubt that he was a victim of Catholic reactionaries, and that his death was a shot across Protestant bows fired by the senior clergy or even the bishop of London himself, John Stokesley.

John Foxe went a stage further in his *Acts and Monuments of the Christian Religion*. Stokesley, he averred, had paid someone 60 gold coins to undertake the murder. However, in his 1570 edition of the book, Foxe changed the name of the instigator. Now, he identified John Incent, canon of St Paul's (and later dean), as the paymaster – a crime to which Incent had allegedly confessed on his deathbed in 1545. The actual hitman was now identified as an Italian.

To confuse the issue yet further, *Holinshed's Chronicles* (1577) attributed the crime to an unnamed felon subsequently hanged at Banbury for an unrelated offence. Can we, 478 years later, make any sense of the conflicting evidence?

The attack has all the hallmarks of a professional 'hit'. The weapon, the location, the timing all indicate a carefully planned assassination.

Hitmen do not come cheap. The early reports of a considerable fee having been paid certainly make sense. If the villain who actually pulled the trigger was the one who later paid for his crime at Banbury, we are left with two suspects as possible instigators of the atrocity. Foxe was – eventually – convinced about Incent's deathbed confession. It was, he declared, attested "by men both of great credit and worshipful estimation".

Dean John Incent allegedly confessed to the murder on

his deathbed. © Getty Images



Dean John Incent allegedly confessed to the murder on his deathbed © Getty Images

But was this middle-ranking priest capable of thinking up and putting into operation a cold-blooded murder?

Time, perhaps, for a little psychological profiling. Incent was a conservative and given to ecclesiastical infighting with more evangelically minded colleagues. But he had no reputation as a persecutor and he did not allow mere theology to stand in the way of his promotion: later he was one of the commissioners sent by Cromwell to dissolve monasteries. Moreover, if Incent believed that Packington was a dangerous heretic, why would his conscience be troubled about ridding the world of him?

Bishop Stokesley was a horse of a very different colour. He already had blood on his hands and actually boasted of having consigned over 30 heretics to the flames. He openly quarrelled with Cromwell and was particularly opposed to the minister's pet project of promoting an English Bible. He was active in hunting down William Tyndale and having him arrested in Antwerp. The translator was burned as a heretic just five weeks before Packington's death.

Here, I think, we may be at the crux of the matter. Stokesley believed passionately that the vernacular Bible should not be available in England. For years he had been fighting a losing battle against the illegal import of Tyndale's New Testament. Anger and frustration could well have driven him to extreme measures. The bishop was clever enough, rich enough, powerful enough and ruthless enough to organise an attack on a Bible smuggler who was a confidant of that loathsome creature, Thomas Cromwell. Perhaps Foxe's first impression was correct.

But then, what are we to make of Incent's confession? Well, we are not obliged to believe that Stokesley acted alone. On the contrary, he would have needed trusted accomplices to help fine-tune the crime. If Incent was a mere sidekick who had supported his bishop's plan to murder a prominent London citizen, he might well have felt the need to cleanse his soul before it followed that of Robert Packington into the presence of the Great Judge.

The assassin's weapon of choice

The pistol that killed Robert Packington made Europe's rulers decidely jumpy

The one fact mentioned in every early account of Robert Packington's murder is that it was perpetrated "with a gun". It was this that made the act shocking, cowardly and diabolical. The weapon referred to, and the only one that can have been used to kill Packington, was a wheellock pistol. Such a firearm was much shorter than an arquebus. It needed no lighted match because the powder was ignited by a spark struck from a flint. The weapon could be hidden beneath a cloak, brought out, fired one-handedly at close range, then as quickly concealed.

The wheellock introduced a new era of political assassination. Invented in the early 16th century, its potential was quickly recognised by European rulers. In 1518 the Holy Roman Emperor Maximillian I banned the manufacture and carrying of "self-igniting handguns that set themselves to firing". Other heads of state were not slow to follow suit. By the 1530s wheellocks were still rare. They were complex and expensive pieces of kit carried by well-to-do, macho braggarts. Few people in London

would ever have seen one. Small wonder that it was commonly believed that the murderer was a foreigner.

Those who held churchmen responsible for Packington's death were quick to call attention to a similar killing in 1514



An illustration shows the hanging of merchant Richard Hunne at St Paul's Cathedral © Robin Mcmorran

An illustration shows the hanging of merchant Richard Hunne at St Paul's Cathedral. © Robin Mcmorran

Shortly after Robert Packington was slain on the streets of Cheapside, stories began circulating of another killing in England's capital 22 years earlier.

In early 1537 an anonymous pamphlet, printed in Antwerp, was being avidly read on the streets of London, telling how one Richard Hunne had been locked up in the Lollards' Tower of St Paul's Cathedral and brutally murdered.

The pamphlet was no mere Protestant diatribe. It made public for the first time the complete coroner's report and named three henchmen of Richard Fitzjames, then bishop of London, who had "feloniously strangled and smothered, and also the neck they did break of the said Richard Hunne... afterward... with the same girdle of the same Richard Hunne... after his death, upon a hook driven into... the wall of the prison... and so hanged him".

Why was the story of this sensational crime revived more than two decades later? Why did it arouse fresh interest at this particular time? Because Hunne, like Packington, was a prominent merchant (a member of the Merchant Taylors' Company) and an outspoken critic of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He too, so it was alleged, had been violently silenced at the behest of the clergy.

The timing of the publication was no coincidence, and readers could not help remarking upon the parallels between the two killings.

Derek Wilson is the author of *The First Horseman*, a novel based upon the Packington affair, written under the name DK Wilson.

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What Experts Wish You Knew about False Memories

scientificamerican.com

Just because you're absolutely confident you remember something accurately doesn't mean it's true

By Julia Shaw on August 8, 2016

Every memory you have ever had is chock-full of errors. I would even go as far as saying that memory is largely an illusion.

This is because our perception of the world is deeply imperfect, our brains only bother to remember a tiny piece of what we actually experience, and every time we remember something we have the potential to change the memory we are accessing.

I often write about the ways in which our memory leads us astray, with a particular focus on 'false memories.' False memories are recollections that feel real but are not based on actual experience.

For this particular article I invited a few top memory researchers to comment on what they wish everyone knew about their field.

First up, we have Elizabeth Loftus from the University of California, Irvine, who is one of the founders of the area of false memory research, and is considered one of the most 'eminent psychologists of the 20th century.'

Elizabeth Loftus says you need independent evidence to corroborate your memories.

According to Loftus: "The one take home message that I have tried to convey in my writings, and classes, and in my TED talk is this: Just because someone tells you something with a lot of confidence and detail and emotion, it doesn't mean it actually happened. You need independent corroboration to know whether you're dealing with an authentic memory, or something that is a product of some other process."

Next up, we have memory scientist Annelies Vredeveldt from the *Vrije Universiteit* Amsterdam, who has done fascinating work on how well we remember when we recall things with other people.

Annelies Vredeveldt says to be careful how you ask questions about a memory.

According to Vredeveldt: "What I'd like everyone to know is how (not) to probe for a memory of an event.

When you are trying to get a story out of someone, be it about a witnessed crime or a wild night out, it seems natural to ask them lots of questions about it. However, asking closed questions, such as 'what was the color of his hair?' or worse, leading questions, such as 'he was a redhead, wasn't he?' often leads to incorrect answers.

It is much better to let the person tell the story of their own accord, without interrupting and without asking questions afterwards. At most, you might want to ask the person if they can tell you a bit more about something they mentioned, but limit yourself to an open and general prompt such as 'can you tell me more about that?'

Research shows that stories told in response to free-recall prompts are much more accurate than stories told in response to a series of closed questions. So if you really want to get to the bottom of something, restrain yourself and don't ask too many questions!"

Finally, we have Chris French from Goldsmiths, University of London, who has done decades of research on anomalous and paranormal memories, and believes that some of these may be the result of false memories.

Chris French wants you to stop believing common memory myths.

"My top 5 take-home messages on memory:

1. *Memory does not work like a video camera*, accurately recording all of the details of witnessed events. Instead, memory (like perception) is a constructive process. We typically remember the gist of an event rather than the exact details.

- 2. When we construct a memory, errors can occur. We will typically fill in gaps in our memories with what we think we must have experienced not necessarily what we actually did experience. We may also include misinformation we encountered after the event. We will not even be consciously aware that this has happened.
- 3. We not only distort memories for events that we have witnessed, we may have completely false memories for events that never occurred at all. Such false memories are particularly likely to arise in certain contexts, such as (unintentionally) through the use of certain dubious psychotherapeutic techniques or (intentionally) in psychology experiments.
- 4. There is no convincing evidence to support the existence of the psychoanalytic concept of repression, despite it being a widely accepted concept.
- 5. There is currently no way to distinguish, in the absence of independent evidence, whether a particular memory is true or false. Even memories which are detailed and vivid and held with 100 percent conviction can be completely false."

The take home message remains: Your memory is incredibly malleable. Because you often cannot spot a false memory once it has taken hold, the only way to prevent false memories is to know that they exist and to avoid things that facilitate them.

Want to learn more about the science of false memory? Learn about the work of Loftus, Vredeveldt, French, and hundreds of other fascinating memory scientists in my new book *The Memory Illusion*.

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The Adamites: Hippie Heretics of the Middle Ages - Medievalists.net

medievalists.net

August 10, 2014 By Medievalists.net

The Middle Ages saw many religious movements emerge, including ones that had radical views of Christianity. Groups such as Flagellants, Beguines, Waldensians and the Brethren of the Free Spirit were often viewed with suspicion by the Papacy and the Catholic hierarchy and in many cases it led to them being condemned as heretical.



Adamites

When Jan Hus, the Czech priest and reformer, was found guilty of heresy and executed in 1415, his followers grew even more discontent with the Catholic church and rejected its authority. By the 1420s the Hussites had become even more radicalized, with some calling for the end of many Catholic doctrines, such as veneration of saints or transubstantiation (that communion was the real body and blood of Christ). Some also wanted to establish a communal society where there were no lords and servants, but rather equality among the people.

When the Hussites were not at war with Crusaders (the Papacy launched five crusades

against them between 1419 to 1434, all of which were defeated) they were often fighting themselves, as various splinter groups emerged. Among them one could find the Taborites, Orebites, Utraquists and, perhaps the most radical of them, the Adamites, who took their name from the Biblical character Adam.

We know very little of the Adamites, but the picture that emerges of them – one that comes primarily from their enemies – was of a people more like the Hippie subculture of the 20th century rather than the Middle Ages.

For example, the chronicler Laurence of Brezova writes:

Wandering through forests and hills, some of them fell into such insanity that men and women threw off their clothes and went nude, saying that clothes had been adopted because of the sin of the first parents, but that they were in a state of innocence. From the same madness they supposed that they were not sinning if one of their brethren had intercourse with one of the sisters, and if the woman conceived, she said she had conceived of the Holy Spirit.

The scholar Enea Silvio Piccolomini, who later became Pope Pius II (1458-1464) also noted their supposed sexual activities:

They indulged in promiscuous intercourse, but no one might take a lover without the consent of Adam, their chief elder. When one of these brethren ardently desired a sister, he took her by the hand, and, going with her to the chief elder, said, "My soul is afire with love of this woman." Whereupon the elder would reply, "Go, be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth."

These views of Adamites were not necessarily new – in the early centuries of Christianity there was a sect called Adamites and that St. Augustine even mentions they practiced nudism while rejecting marriage. Some of their ideas may have survived into the Middle Ages and helped to establish the theology of these Czech peoples.

The activities of this group proved to be too radical for the Taborites, and in 1421 the Adamites and their leader, a priest named Peter Kanis, were expelled from the Taborite community. The 200-300 followers of the Adamites would establish their own community a few miles away, but soon the Taborites were accusing them of raiding and attacking their people.



Jan Žižka leading the Hussites

During the summer and fall of 1421 the Taborite military commander Jan Žižka launched attacks against the Adamites, killing and capturing almost all their followers, with the captives being burned as heretics. While there were reports of Adamites still roaming around Czech lands in the following years, this small movement was destroyed. The Taborites themselves were later viewed as too radical as well and much of their power was destroyed at the Battle of Lipany thirteen years later.

The Czech lands continued to be a 'hot-bed' of religious movements during the fifteenth-century, and many scholars see them as a precursor to the Protestant Reformation.

To learn more about this topic, see *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages*, by Robert Lerner and *A History of the Hussite Revolution*, by Howard Kaminsky.

Filed Under: Features Tagged With: Czech, Fifteenth Century, Heresy, Hussite, Jan

Hus, Religious Life



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Copeland Says Christians Who Vote Against Trump Will Be Cursed With Poverty, Gay Children

bizstandardnews.com

1 day ago August 10, 2016August 10, 2016



Kenneth Copeland

By Hamish Balfour

Televangelist Kenneth Copeland has warned Christians that if they don't support Donald Trump, they will be punished by God.

"If Christians don't support Trump, they are risking the wrath of God," said Copeland in an appearance on Trinity Broadcasting Network. "Trump has been chosen by God, and by rejecting him, they are rejecting

God. They could be punished with barrenness, poverty or even having a gay child."

Copeland is not the only Christian urging other believers to support Trump.

David Barton, an author of wildly inaccurate history books, urged other Christians to overlook Trump's rough edges, said Right Wing Watch. Barton compared Trump to flawed biblical figures such as Noah and King David.

"Maybe God's got a different standard than what we do," said Barton, who is a frequent guest on the Glenn Beck show. "Maybe at a national leadership level, there are people who do good things for the nation who have character flaws ... What God calls great leaders wouldn't fit your litmus test, but maybe you need to catch up with where God is rather than expecting God to catch up with where you are."

Barton has previously called Trump "God's guy."

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Bum-bum-bum-bum.... bummmmmmm.

08/25/2016 12:54 am ET Ed MazzaOvernight Editor

Airlander 10, a massive aircraft that critics said looked like a giant, flying butt, crashed after its second test flight in Bedfordshire, England, on Wednesday.

No one was injured in the incident.

"The Airlander experienced a heavy landing and the front of the flight deck has sustained some damage which is currently being assessed," Hybrid Air Vehicles, the company developing the aircraft, said in a statement.

"The flight went really well and the only issue was when it landed," a company spokesperson to the BBC.



The Airlander 10 seen after crashing during its second test flight. Airlander 10, seen during its first test flight on Aug. 17, 2016.



The Airlander 10 seen after crashing during its second test flight. Airlander 10, seen during its first test flight on Aug. 17, 2016.

Dominic Lipinski/PA Wire

At 302 feet long, the Airlander 10 is 50 feet longer than the largest configuration of the Boeing 747. However, it's also been nicknamed "The Flying Bum" by the British media because it looks as much like a derriere as it does a dirigible:

Darren Staples / Reuters

Originally developed by the U.S. military, Airlander 10 combined "the best characteristics of fixed wing aircraft and helicopters with lighter-than-air technology," the company said.

The Airlander can fly for five days with a crew, and up to two weeks if unmanned. It can handle communication, carry cargo and perform surveys for military and commercial purposes.

No timetable for repairs or future flights was announced.

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Alaska's Otterman, or Kushtaka

October 11, 2015



Is the Otterman on the roster of Alaska's state monsters? Does this cryptid actually exist? Or could something else be lurking in the wilderness, taking the blame? Cryptozoology fans will want to know, so CryptoVille investigates!

The next installment of Destination America's new show, *Alaska Monsters*, will cover the Otterman. If nothing else, these shows bring to light creatures I never heard of before and I am delighted to investigate! So here's my take on the Otterman.

In the folklore of the Tlingit and Tsimshian Indian tribes, Kushtaka (Kooshdakhaa) translates to "land otter man." These creatures were said to shape-shift into human form or that of an otter.

Interestingly, the Dan'aina tribe of South Central Alaska and the Inupict tribe of Northern Alaska have their own names for these creatures: Nat'ina and Urayuli respectively.



Land_Otter_Man-card

Variety of Tales

There are many versions of the Kushtaka or Otterman stories. In some, they are kind and helpful while in others they are menacing tricksters that try to lure sailors to their deaths, people near the shore into the water, and small children into their clutches to steal their souls by turning them into Kushtakas.

Part of the legend says Kushtakas make a high pitched whistle – low, high, then low again. It's also said they can be driven away with copper, urine, and sometimes fire.

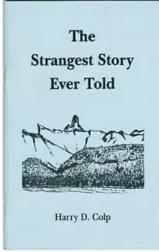
Overall the Otterman's goal seems to be to turn humans into more Kushtakas/ Ottermen. That's where the terror comes into the story because according to Tlingit tradition, in order to be reincarnated and eventually reach everlasting life in the hereafter, one must be human. If one is turned into a Kushtaka, they are out of luck unless a Shaman finds them who can undo the damage.

It is said that the Ottermen are afraid of dogs, so having one nearby would protect you.

One Real-life Account

I found this story in an article on the EsoterX site called *The Fearsome Alaska Tlingit Kushtaka: If it's not One Thing, it's an Otter.* Harry Colp was a gold-prospector exploring the area around the Patterson Glacier, north of Thomas Bay, Alaska, with several colleagues. The year was 1900 and what he recorded in a manuscript was later discovered by his daughter. Sometime after that it was produced as "*The Strangest Story Every Told.*"

"I left come the next morning, which was a fine sunny day. I took only the rifle with me, and when I came to the ridge, sure enough there were a few grouse hooting. I shot two and had gotten them



StrangestStory

when I bagged another one, which fell down the ridge about a hundred yards before it hung up."

The story continues with him climbing down a ridge to fetch the dead bird when he spots a very promising ledge of quartz that he thought would have gold associated with it. He then began looking around for landmarks so he could find the area again to show his colleagues.

"... I turned half round to get a back sight on some mountain peaks, and lying below me on the other side of the ridge from the ledge was the half-moon lake the Indian had told me about.

Right there, fellows, I got the scare of my life. I hope to God I never see or go through the likes of it again. Swarming up the ridge toward me from the

lake were the most hideous creatures. I couldn't call them anything but devils, as they were neither men nor monkeys – yet looked like both. They were entirely sexless, their bodies covered with long coarse hair, except where the scabs and running sores had replaced it. Each one seemed to be reaching out for me and striving to be the first to get me. The air was full of their cries and the stench from their sores and bodies made me faint.



ThomasBay

I forgot my broken gun and tried to use it on the first ones, and then I threw it at them and turned and ran. God, how I did run! I could feel their hot breath on my back. Their long claw-like fingers scraped my back. The smell from their steaming, stinking bodies was making me sick; while the noises they made, yelling, screaming and breathing, drove me mad. Reason left me. How I reached the canoe or how I hung on to that piece of quartz is a mystery to me.

When I came to, it was night; and I was lying in the bottom of my canoe, drifting between Thomas Bay and Sukhoi Island, cold, hungry, and crazy for a drink of water. But only to satisfy the latter urge, I started for Wrangell, and here I am. You no doubt think I am either crazy or lying. All I can say is, there is the quartz. Never let me hear the name of Thomas Bay again and for God's sake help me get away

tomorrow on that boat!"

This handwritten manuscript is kept at the Alaska State Library. (Map of Thomas Bay area above.)

What Academics Think

Anthropologists, folklorists, and psychology experts have many reasons to think the Otterman is a manifestation of humanity's longing to explain existence, death, and the hereafter. They go into quite a bit of detail explaining it.

But here in CryptoVille, we want to know is it really a cryptid or a legend?

So far my opinion is that Bigfoots are probably being confused with the Otterman legend. The description by Harry Colp sounds to me exactly like that of a group of Bigfoots. They can have open wounds or sores just like any other animal.





otter aaw1

Why Pick an Otter?

I've wondered how an adorable otter became associated with such a horrible creature. Anthropologists have a long explanation for it, starting with the difference between sea otters and river otters and how the Tlingit perceive them, plus the priorities of the Tlingit culture ... etc.

It's interesting reading so if you're up for a quick study, see my references below. (Southeast Alaska Indian art linked to adorable pictures of otters above and below, as seen on EsoterX website.)





otter_carving

Overall, it reminds me of something that happens nowadays. You know how some people hate the Fall season because they see it as everything dying, drying up, disintegrating? Yet others look at this season as a time of abundance because of the harvesting, beauty because of the gorgeous leaves and happy pumpkins, and yummy food. I guess you could look at otters like the adorable fuzzballs they are, or see them as tricky, untrustworthy creatures.

The glass is either half full, or half empty, right?

Does the Otterman Exist?

There is no good evidence to point to and say there it is – an Otterman/ Kushtaka! Certainly no evidence that will convince the scientific community.

That said, I think it's more than likely that the Otterman of today is a Bigfoot. I don't believe these animals shape-shift, steal souls, or lure people to their deaths.

I believe anthropologists, folklorists, and psychologists are pretty much right in their opinions of how the legend of Kushtaka arose and why it did. Am I putting down the Indians' belief system and folklore? No. They are entitled to believe what they want.

But as always, I'm looking for scientifically sound evidence that these animals exist. I've said before I'm convinced Bigfoots are real for a variety of reasons. And I feel pretty certain the Otterman is just another name for the big hairy guy we love to research and investigate.

17 comments

1. Nathan says: October 4, 2014 at 5:43 am I really enjoyed your article and agree with many of ;your characterizations. However, being a resident of Southeast Alaska and being married to a Tlingit/Haida woman I must disagree with your assertion that the Kushtaka and Bigfoot are the same creature. Though there are bigfoot stories in Southeast Alaska, all of the stories I've heard (some first-hand accounts, mostly second-hand) about the Kushtaka suggest it is more of a spiritual entity than a flesh and blood hominid. I agree that it would seemingly be impossible to prove the Kushtaka's existence, just as it seems impossible to prove beyond doubt the existence of ghosts or demons. I have heard from numerous sources about the baby-like crying, and a woman's screams in association with the Kushtaka. They attempt to appeal to our curiosity to lure us in. So says the myth anyway. Thanks for the article.

CryptoVille says:

October 4, 2014 at 11:27 am

Hi Nathan!

Thank you VERY much for this clarification! I wish other sources had stated it as clearly as you did. I'm edified to know the Kushtaka is a spiritual entity – that makes a LOT more sense. I'll remember that.

Thanks for visiting CryptoVille! ... Susan (CryptoVille)

2. Ohtar says:

January 5, 2015 at 7:46 pm

The Kushtaka is remarkably similar to the celtic Dobharchu, or Otter King. It's interesting that two cultures on opposite sides of the world came up with something so similar.

CryptoVille says:

January 5, 2015 at 9:11 pm

That's very interesting to know Ohtar! Thanks for sharing that!

... Susan (CryptoVille)

3. Liam B says:

January 5, 2015 at 8:58 pm

WHOA learned a lot more than I thought I was going to for my school project!! shout-out to: CryptoVille and Nathan!! both of you thanks for the info!!!!

CryptoVille says:

January 5, 2015 at 9:12 pm

Thanks Liam! I wish you all the best with your project!

... Susan (CryptoVille)

Liam B says:

January 5, 2015 at 9:13 pm

Also REALLY into cryptozology even have a book titled cryptozology a to z anyway haven't seen your other pages but ever considered the Shunka Warak'in

CryptoVille says:

January 5, 2015 at 9:15 pm

That's a new one on me. I'll have to look into it soon!

4. Liam B says:

January 5, 2015 at 9:30 pm

also have you considered the Wendigo couldn't sleep for a few days after learning about this one you'll find out why if you don't already know creepy... VERY creepy.

CryptoVille says:

January 5, 2015 at 9:33 pm

I think I touched on the Wendigo in the Rougarou article, maybe some Bigfoot ones. I haven't done a full article on them ... yet.

5. **Liam B** says:

January 5, 2015 at 9:34 pm

thanks nice to know your page helps a lot ill be sure to check out the other ones

6. Liam B says:

February 12, 2015 at 1:34 pm

Hey you think you could check out my blog I got a lot of inspiration from your blog and Coleman and others visit rejectedshotgun.112.wix.com/talesfromthecryptids (this is my blog site) if you are interested. Also please reply and tell me if you got the pun! (answer: tales from the crypt is an old tv show and when you add -ids it becomes my blog talesfromthecrypt-ids).

CryptoVille says:

February 12, 2015 at 5:35 pm

Hi Liam! I have visited your nice blog & I think you're doing a great job!

Unfortunately my time is limited mostly because of "real life" stuff I have to attend to, plus the mountain of time I spend doing research.

However, a lot of people read the comments section of these articles, so they'll see your site is available to visit and probably will!

Good luck with everything!!

... Susan

7. Luke says:

September 8, 2015 at 8:04 pm

I've had a lot of experience with them in the past 3 years. I thought that encounters with them are common with many people but it seems they just have a special interest in me. I've learned a lot but Nathan did such a good job summarizing and clarifying I don't have much I feel compelled to add. They can turn into any animate thing and they can cross the spirit/physical boundary at will. They swarmed our house for a week before it burned down. One pulled a light post out of the ground, concrete and all, it left claw marks in the metal. They definitely are not sasquach, tho there is evidence of those near the border. They arent all evil, but if you aren't careful with them you will end up way over your head.. metaphorically and literally.

CryptoVille says:

December 8, 2015 at 10:12 pm

That's interesting, Luke. Their behavior doesn't sound friendly or nice, and I have to wonder if they are more of the demonic variety rather than something benevolent.

I'm sorry to hear about your house burning down. I hope things get better for you very soon.

Thanks for visiting CryptoVille! ... Susan (CryptoVille)

Luke says:

April 20, 2016 at 5:39 pm

I wanted to know what they were about. That night at fish camp my brother was hearing high pitch laughing (for an hour), and had intense feelings of being watched. I was seeing a wall of hundreds of swirling writhing faces every time I closed my eyes. Despite that I dozed off, when I woke up one was over me. I was face to face with it. It was long, stretching all the way to the river, and pitch black. Despite all this I was not afraid at all. It took something out of my chest which I later found out was my 3rd chakra. That sounds bad but I actually felt good. I just recently found out that chakras are not needed, so it may have been doing a service. They also gave me a gift... it seems because they felt bad about the house.

8. CryptoVille says:

April 20, 2016 at 5:50 pm

Amazing!! See if you can get a picture or video sometime, if you see it/them again. They may not show up in the pictures, but it's worth a try.

Thanks for visiting CryptoVille! ... Susan (CryptoVille)

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Chasing the Boogie Man on Alaska's Kooshdakhaa Spire - Alpinist.com

Erik Bonnett alpinist.com

Posted on: June 15, 2015



Between May 18 and May 25, the author, Erik Bonnett, and Max Fisher climbed two new long routes on the border of southeast Alaska and British Columbia in the Coast Mountains. First, starting on May 19, they climbed Otter Water Boogie Man (5.11- A1, 2,000') on Kooshdakhaa Spire, ca. 7,500 feet (pictured) in Alaska. A few days later, they crossed the Canadian border and over a glacial pass to establish Lichening Bolt Buttress (5.11-, 1,300') on an unnamed 7,000-foot peak. [Photo] Erik Bonnett

On May 19, one day after arriving in Alaska's Coast Mountains, Max Fisher (Canadian) and I (American) climbed the first of two new routes, one on Kooshdakhaa Spire, ca. 7,500 feet, and the other on an unnamed 7,000-foot peak, located over a glacial pass.

advertisement

William Wacker, a southeastern Alaskan climber, asserted in the 2013 *American Alpine Journal* that "most of the mountains surrounding Haines are geologically not good to climb without snow on them." In other words, the Coast Mountains are known for poor rock quality. However, Wacker conceded that there are exceptions. In my opinion, Kooshdakhaa Spire and the unnamed peak are such exceptions and contain quality climbing.

The Kooshdakhaa group of peaks is located about seven miles west of 7,127-foot Mt. Foster, a mountain on the border between Canada and the United States. At the southern edge of the group, Kooshdakhaa Spire rises more than 2,000 feet above a hanging tributary of the Chilkat Glacier.

Fisher first spotted the spire in 2013 when he was leading a NOLS expedition in a nearby valley and snapped a picture of the clean buttress feature. "It looked steep; eighty degrees at least, maybe vertical," he told me.

(Top) Castle Grayskull [named after a fortress in the 1980s cartoon He Man and the Masters of the Universe—Ed.], also called Kooshdakhaa E4, was first attempted by Dave Anderson and his party in summer 2003. (Bottom) Fisher starting up the 300-foot hand crack on Kooshdakhaa Spire, 2014. The team summited Kooshdakhaa Spire once in 2014, via a moderate route, then attempted it twice by a harder route but failed. They returned in May 2015 and finished their project on the spire in 33-hours round trip. [Photo] Erik Bonnett

A year later, in 2014, and with support from a Copp-Dash Award, Fisher and I visited the area for the first time. After we made the first ascent of Kooshdakhaa Spire, ca. 7,500 feet, via a moderate snow, ice and rock route, we made two attempts on a steeper, more challenging line but retreated seven pitches up. Though the route we attempted contained sections of imperfect rock, it also had a 300-foot hand crack splitting through two roofs.

On May 19 of this year, Fisher and I rapidly ascended to our previous high point on Kooshdakhaa Spire. From there, I jammed an offwidth roof crack and gained access to the steeper crack systems above. From bergshrund to summit, we were on the wall for 33 hours, climbing fourteen pitches of 5.10 to 5.11 with some aid.

Fisher and I called the route Otter Water Boogie Man (5.11- A1, 2,000'), a loose translation of the word Kooshdakhaa. In the mythology of the Tlingit and Tsimshian native people of southeastern Alaska, a Kooshdakhaa is a shape shifter that lured fisherman to their deaths, though at other times it saved the lost from perishing from the cold. The name represents the range of experiences we encountered on the spire, from shivering to sunshine to storms to splitter cracks.

Fisher jams up moderate flaring cracks on the final pitch of Lichening Bolt Buttress (5.11-, 1,300') on an unnamed 7,000-foot peak in British Columbia. [Photo] Erik Bonnett

As the weather held stable, Fisher and I moved across the Canadian border and over a pass to the valley that Anderson's group had previously explored. There we found good rock across from ca. 7,800-foot Castle Grayskull/Kooshdakhaa E4 and climbed a new route, Lichening Bolt Buttress (5.11-, 1,300'), on the unnamed 7,000-foot peak. Our route ascends aprons and crack systems with mostly moderate climbing but with a few 5.10 and 5.11- cruxes.

Fisher traversing from their first to second climbing objective. The team discovered that rafts worked better than sleds for transporting their gear. After completing their second objective, they paddled out of the area down the Nourse River. [Photo] Erik Bonnett

During both expeditions, Fisher and I arrived by airplane and returned to civilization by packraft.

Sources: Erik Bonnett, Max Fisher, 2013 American Alpine Journal, 2014 American Alpine Journal

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Did Amelia Earhart die a castaway? Eerie evidence suggests she did

22:19 EST, 9 September 2016 | dailymail.co.uk



Pioneering aviator Amelia Earhart 'died a castaway after crashing on a Pacific island' - despite making more than 100 chilling radio distress calls that were heard around the world

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

- Earhart disappeared from radar on June 2, 1937 over the Pacific Ocean
- She was trying to find Howland Island, near Honolulu
- But a group says she landed on Gardner Island, 400 nautical miles away
- Over 100 radio calls, supposedly from Earhart, were heard
- A skeleton, ultimately identified as female was found on the island
- And 1930s-appropriate wreckage has been found there
- But the plane wasn't found it may have sunk into the sea
- The group plans to return with submarines next year

By James Wilkinson For Dailymail.com

Record-breaker Amelia Earhart, who vanished in 1937 while attempting a round-the-world voyage, may have died a castaway on a remote Pacific island, an expert said.

Earhart, who in 1932 became the first person to fly across the Atlantic Ocean solo, vanished while trying to find Howland Island, 1,700 nautical miles southwest of Honolulu.

But according to the NY Post, Ric Gillespie of The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR) says that Earhart's real fate is more chilling: She died a castaway on a different Pacific island.



Vanished: Amelia Earhart disappeared on July 2, 1937, while flying around the world. She had been trying to find Howland Island, near Honolulu, but got lost over the Pacific Ocean



Wings: Earhart was flying this Lockheed Electra when she disappeared. Many believe she and her navigator plunged into the Pacific, but some say she landed on Gardner Island

Earhart was four months into her 29,000-mile trip

when she began to run low on fuel while trying to find Howland Island.

She and her navigator, Fred Noonan, were last seen on radar on June 2. Then they disappeared.

What happened to the pair is a mystery, but Gillespie believes they didn't plunge into the water.

In fact, he says, Earhart and Noonan landed, injured but alive, on Gardner Island, also known as Nikumaroro, around 400 miles southeast of Howland Island.

How does he know?

'People started hearing radio distress calls from the airplane and they were verified,' he told an audience at a talk in North Carolina on August 5.

From July 2 onward he says, more than 100 radio distress calls were made by Earhart and heard by people all over the world, from Texas to Australia.



Castaway: This is Gardner Island, also known as Nikumaroro. The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR) believes she and the navigator landed here



Injured: The group claims that over 100 radio messages were recorded from Earhart between June 2 and June 6, in

which she said she and navigator Fred Noonan (left) were injured



Location: The island is located deep in the Pacific. Earhart's short wave broadcasts were supposedly heard in Australia, Texas and Florida

They included a housewife in Texas, who heard Earhart on short-wave radio saying she had landed partly in water, and a 12-year-old girl in Florida, who tried to transcribe what Earhart said.

She must have landed with some fuel, Gillespie says, otherwise she wouldn't have been able to use the radio.

Earhart told those listening that she was injured, but Noonan was worse.

But if the pair were alive on the 3.7-by-2.1-mile island, no-one came to find them. The last call was logged on June 6.

In 1940, Gerald Gallagher, a British colonial officer and licensed pilot, told his superiors that he'd found a skeleton on the island.

It was sent to Fiji where measurements were taken. It was initially identified as male, but reexamination of the measurements in 1998 concluded it was probably a tall white female.

The bones were lost in the years between.

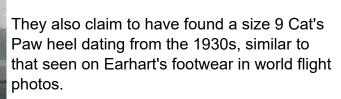
Amelia Earhart: The first woman to fly nonstop across the US



Discovery: TIGHAR says it found this piece of aluminum, which was made to 1930s standards, on the island. Its members say it came from her plane

Panel: This is the panel that they believe shows the aluminum piece; the photo was taken just before Earhart went missing. TIGHAR says the plane was pulled into the sea by the tide

TIGHAR members - including engineers and archaeologists - also claim to have found aluminium paneling fitting 1930s specifications, Plexiglas like that used in Earhart's plane, and ball bearings.

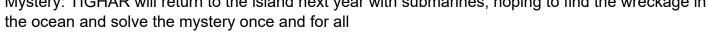


But the plane itself is nowhere to be found because, Gillespie says, it would have been pulled into the sea by the tide.

TIGHAR plans to search the area with submarines next year - the 80th anniversary of Earhart's disappearance.

Perhaps then the truth will be discovered.

Mystery: TIGHAR will return to the island next year with submarines, hoping to find the wreckage in





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Hundreds Of Americans Wash Up Illegally In Canada After Wind Derails River Party

huffingtonpost.com

Some rescued floaters tried to swim away from Canadian shores, for fear of not having documentation.

08/22/2016 08:19 pm ET | **Updated** 2 days ago



Handout . / Reuters

TORONTO - About 1,500 Americans floating down a river that separates the United States from Canada had to be rescued from the water when strong rains and winds sent them illegally into Canadian territory, the country's coast guard said on Monday.

The Americans were taking part in the annual Port Huron Float Down on Sunday in the St. Clair River, which runs between the U.S. state of Michigan and the Canadian province of Ontario.

The winds blew the flotilla of inflatable rafts and inner tubes off course and

toward the Canadian shore. Some rafts deflated, spurring a rescue effort by the Canadian Coast Guard as well as federal and provincial police, coast guard spokeswoman Carol Launderville said in an email.

Most "floaters" had to be rescued from the water, with many towed to shore, according to the coast guard.

"They were terrified of entering another country without documentation. No one carries their passport or any ID, and a lot were drinking alcohol," Peter Garapick, superintendent of search and rescue for the coast guard, told CBC television

Some tried to swim back to the United States.

"We had to pull a lot of people out of the water and say 'no," Garapick said.

The Americans were gathered at Sarnia, Ontario, and bussed back to the United States by the city's public transit.

Sarnia police did not say whether anyone was charged in the incident and there were only minor injuries reported.

Launderville said the event has no official organizer and poses "significant and unusual hazards" due to the river's fast-moving current and participants' lack of life jackets.

A Facebook page for the event, which dates back more than 30 years in the city of Port Huron, west of the border from Sarnia, made a post Sunday night thanking Canadian authorities.

"You've shown us true kindness and what it means to be amazing neighbors!" the post read.

The Facebook page appears to be operated by a group named Port Huron Float Down, which says on its website it is not an organizer. The page's operators did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

(Reporting by Ethan Lou in Toronto; Editing by Andrew Hay)

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Coast Guard's last lightkeeper looks to 300-year milestone

23:39 EST, 6 September 2016 | dailymail.co.uk



America's oldest lighthouse prepares to celebrate 300th birthday with the celebrations led by its last ever keeper

- Boston Light is the nation's first and oldest lighthouse station
- MailOnline US news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

 Situated in Boston Harbor, it is the U.S. Coast Guard's last manned station
 - Sally Snowman, 65, is the last resident keeper and lives on the island
 - Boston Light's first two keepers drowned and many more perished
 - Lighthouse will celebrate its 300th anniversary on September 14

By Associated Press

A singular lighthouse and its unique keeper are celebrating a milestone.

Boston Light, the nation's first and oldest lighthouse station, turns 300 on September 14 and Sally Snowman, the Coast Guard's last resident keeper, is helping with celebrations.

Events are planned for downtown Boston's waterfront and other parts of mainland Massachusetts. The lighthouse's beam — visible for 27 miles — will even be ceremonially re-lighted at sunset.



Boston Light, America's oldest lighthouse, sits on Little Brewster Island in Boston Harbor on August 17 2016

'How many things established 300 years ago are still functioning as they were intended to be?' Snowman said to a reporter making a recent visit. 'It was a major aid to navigation in 1716, and that's exactly what it's doing today. For me, that's mind-boggling.'

The 65-year-old former college instructor has been keeper for 13 years and is the light's first female keeper.

The Coast Guard has phased out resident keepers

at all light stations save for Boston Light because Congress in 1989 mandated the Guard specifically staff and keep the light public in perpetuity.



Sally Snowman, the keeper of Boston Light, wears Revolutionary-era clothing as she speaks about its history on Little Brewster Island in Boston Harbor

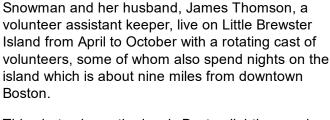
Snowman steps from the keeper's house on Little Brewster Island in Boston Harbor

Snowman unties a dock line at Little Brewster Island in Boston Harbor. The U.S. Coast Guard's last manned station will celebrate the 300th anniversary of its first lighting on September 14

Snowman, dressed in the Colonial dress and bonnet she wears on lighthouse tours, said she loves the solitude her job often affords.

'Island living is something that suits my personality,' she said. 'I'm an introvert by nature, and I've always been able to entertain myself. It's no problem to just leave me here. Just airdrop my food, and I can stay here forever.'





This photo shows the iconic Boston lighthouse circa 1905

Boston Light and the 1859 duplex keeper's house are pictured in this image

The lighthouse is seen here circa the early 1780s, from a painting by Capt. Matthew Parke

Boston Light has been a central part of Snowman's life.

The Weymouth resident, who holds two doctorate degrees and taught at Curry College in Milton, Massachusetts, started volunteering there over 20 years ago and became a paid civilian employee in 2004.

She and Thomson married on the island in 1994 and have written three books about the lighthouse.

A spiritual person who drums, chants and meditates on the island, Snowman said she often senses

spirits and other ghostlike presences. It's not surprising, she said, since Boston Light's first two keepers drowned and many more perished in nearby shipwrecks over the years.

Snowman also believes she was a keeper in a past life.

'The first time I went up there, I just felt like I had done it a thousand times before. There was just something intuitive about it,' she said of the lighthouse tower, which was built by the British, destroyed by them during the Revolutionary War and rebuilt by the new American nation in 1783.





Snowman gives a tour of the gear room inside the lighthouse on Little Brewster Island

The keeper looks out from the lantern room while standing next to the Fresnel lens

Snowman waves to a cruise boat from Little Brewster Island in Boston Harbor

Time on the island is roughly divided between busy tour days and quieter weekdays.

Friday through Sunday, guided tours swell the roughly 3-acre island's population. More than 200 people visit or work there on a given summer weekend, Snowman said.

Monday to Thursday, Snowman and a pair of volunteers typically do routine cleaning and maintenance in the 89-foot lighthouse tower, as well as the keeper's residence, fog signal building, cistern building and boathouse.



'We're in a marine environment, so we need to keep on top of things,' Snowman said.

But even with the regular routine, she admitted, it's easy to slip into island time.

'Everything is done just a little bit slower. If it's really hot in the middle of the day, we take a siesta. We work earlier in the day or work later into the evening,' Snowman said. 'We don't have the hum of the mainland, the cars and the noise level of humanity. What we have is the wind and the sea and seagulls.'

In this August 25, 2016 photo, Boston Light,

America's oldest lighthouse, flashes in Boston Harbor as seen from Hull

Comments (3)

Nova Scotia Guy, Cole Harbour, Canada, about 7 hours ago

Sambro Island Lighthouse is a landfall lighthouse located at the entrance to Halifax Harbour, Nova Scotia, on an island near the community of Sambro in the Halifax Regional Municipality. It is the oldest surviving lighthouse in North America



Nova Scotia Guy, Cole Harbour, Canada, about 7 hours ago

Sambro Island Lighthouse is a landfall lighthouse located at the entrance to Halifax Harbour, Nova Scotia, on an island near the community of Sambro in the Halifax Regional Municipality. It is the oldest surviving lighthouse in North America ...

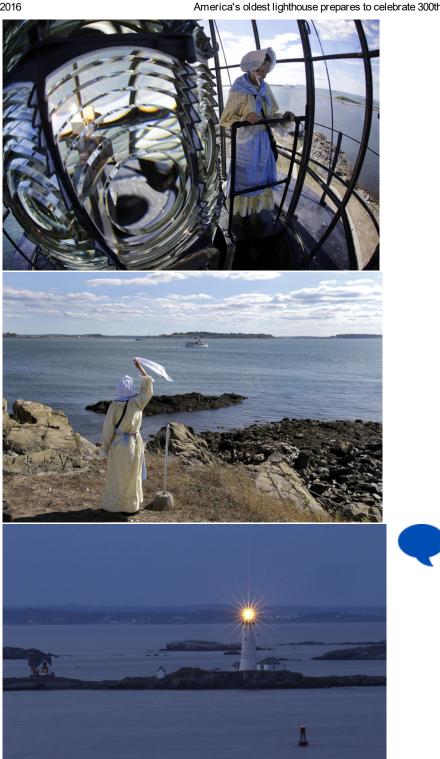
kikib2, Manassas, about 15 hours ago

Fantastic story!

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Are these alien skulls? New DNA tests on Elongated Paracas Skulls could 'change history'

express.co.uk



NEW DNA tests on bizarre elongated 2,000-year old skulls, which it has been suggested could come from aliens, have raised more question marks about their

origins.

By Jon Austin Jon Austin

PUBLISHED: 14:27, Thu, Jul 28, 2016 | UPDATED: 15:36, Thu, Jul 28, 2016



A Paracas skull left compared to an alien grey and an ancient man with elongated skull.

The skulls, found in Peru, created waves in 2014 after a geneticist undertook preliminary DNA tests, and reported unknown results.

He found they had mitochondrial DNA "with mutations unknown in any human, primate, or animal known so far".

A second round of DNA tests have now

been carried out - which some saying the results are just as controversial - leading to further speculation the skull's former owners may not have been from this planet.

Elongated skulls were caused by ancient civilisations purposefully mutilating their skulls from a young age.

It was done by binding the head between two pieces of wood, or binding in cloth.

But, they have always interested alien conspiracy theorists due to the enlarged craniums produced, which appear similar to the mythological alien grey species.

The new tests on the skulls have, however, not aided the alien theory, but have raised new questions about how the Americas were populated.

Several of the Paracas Skulls that were sent for DNA testing.

Samples were taken from hair and bone powder, taken drilling deep into a skull's foramen magnum.

They were then sent to three labs in Canada, and two in the US, for tests.

Geneticists were told the samples were from an ancient mummy, to avoid any preconceptions.

The skulls were now found to have European and Middle Eastern Origin, raising questions over

when man first travelled from Eurasia to

Paracas is a desert peninsula in Pisco Province on the south coast of Peru.

the Americas, as they are 2,000 to

The archaeologist states that the Paracas skulls, the position of the foramen magnum is completely different than a normal human being, it is also smaller, which lends itself to our theory that this is not cradle headboarding, this is

3,000 years old.





genetic.

Author and researcher LA Marzulli

Around 300 of the amazing skulls were found by Peruvian archaeologist Julio Tello in 1928 in an elaborate graveyard.

But there still remains a mystery over the shape of the Paracas skulls.

Cranial deformation changed the shape of a skull, but in normal cases did not alter other features.

However, the Paracas skulls have other unusual features and are the biggest elongated skulls ever found.

Author and researcher LA Marzulli told Ancient Origins: "There is a possibility that it might have been cradle headboarded, but the reason why I don't think so is because the position of the foramen magnum is back towards the rear of the skull.

"A normal foramen magnum would be closer to the jaw line."

He said an archaeologist has written a paper about his study of the position of the foramen magnum.

He added: "The archaeologist states that the Paracas skulls, the position of the foramen magnum is completely different than a normal human being, it is also smaller, which lends itself to our theory that this is not cradle headboarding, this is genetic."

Mr Marzulli claimed some of the Paracas skulls also have very pronounced cheek bones, different eye sockets and no connective tissue joint between the two parietal bones of the skull.

There is a disease known as craniosynostosis, which results in the fusing together of the two parietal plates, however, Mr Marzulli said there is no evidence of this disease in the Paracas skulls.

He stopped short of suggesting they were of alien origin, but the mystery of exactly where they came from looks set to continue.

3 Comments

DownUnderDave

Alien skulls!!! Huh!, I'll have some of what these X-Spurts are smoking

The dark Sid

Katie Price off spring.

olgrumps

This is hardly a contentious subject, despite the temor of this article!

GENETIC samples are freely available from a selection of graveyards across the SOLENT. I can think of an aunt of one of our popular TV stars, who was an acknowledged member of the Flathead Tribe.

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« Josh Duggar is being sued over the photo he used on AshleyMadison.com

1 in 10 say their pastor has endorsed a political candidate from the pulpit »

Williamstown mayor says Ark Encounter is not the economic boon they expected

August 7, 2016(2016-08-07709:06:11+00:00) by Dan Arelhttp://www.patheos.com/blogs/danthropology/author/danarel/

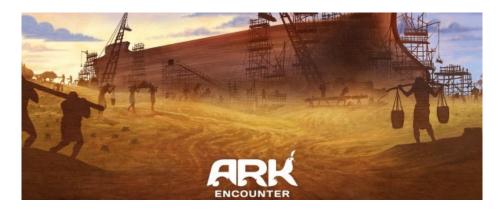


Image: Ark Encounter

Williamstown, Kentucky expected a big economic boon after the arrival of Ken Ham's Ark Encounter in early July. The reality, however, is much different.

"We do have some (tourists) exploring downtown," said Williamstown Mayor Rick Skinner "As the merchants are getting more advertising with the ark, we're picking up traffic, but it's not been as immediate as we thought it might be."

The lack of tourists can likely be contributed to a few factors.

One, visitation to the park has been a lot lower than the expectations set by Ham. The crowds on opening day peaked around 5,000 and have not done much better since.

Another reason is noted by reporter Scott Wartman in the Cincinnati Enquirerhttp://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2016/08/06/one-month-impact-nkus-giant- ark-felt-near-but-not-far/88044342/> is that "many people don't make the trip to the region just for the ark. Conventions in Louisville, Lexington and Cincinnati bus people in to see the ark then bus them back out. That means many of these people aren't traveling around the countryside."

The lackluster draw from the ark is also having an impact on development in the area.

"Property owners have held onto property hoping the ark will drive values up, he said." That's delayed three developments, Wells said, one a restaurant, another a 'themebased' hotel. The third project he wouldn't release any details on, citing a confidentiality agreement," writes Wartman.

Williamstown took a big chance on the park, granting the attraction more than \$60 million in Tax Incremental Funding (TIF). Without such funding, the park would never have gotten off the ground. Over the next 30-years, 75% of the property taxes paid by the park will go back to repaying the TIF.

In return for this funding, and other state rebates, such as the \$18 million sales tax rebate, the park promised to bring in tourists, hotel development, restaurants, and more.

Yet, with the underwhelming performance of the park, in its peak opening summer, developers have little to no incentive to bring their projects to the small town.

In the end, this hurts the town of Williamstown, it hurts the taxpayers, it hurts the local schools and businesses.

If Ham can't produce visitors in July and August, how is he going to ramp up visitation throughout the school year and during the dead of winter?

Stay in touch with the Danthropology blog and like Dan Arel on Facebook:

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About Dan Arel

Dan Arel is an award-winning journalist and the author of the best-selling book Parenting Without

Godhttp://www.amazon.com/dp/1908675292?tag=daarbl-20. He is also a

freelance columnist for CounterPunch, Kettle Magazine, and The

Huffington Post. Follow him on Twitter: @danarel<https://twitter.com/danarel>

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AJOHN151 • 13 minutes ago

why they expected millions to come and see this b/t amazes me. folks dont have anything better to do i wont go spend the money iwould have spent to go there watching paint dry much more exiting

Rob Britt • 3 hours ago

I guess they can hope for a flood. I assume they have insurance.

```
1 ^ Peply • Share
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Bob Saccamanno • 3 hours ago

Sorry dude, but that thing is a joke that will never draw people at \$40 a head. In the state of Kentucky, you'd make more money off of a brother/sister dating club .

```
1 ^ Reply • Share >
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Blaine Coplon • 4 hours ago

What a surprise a crazy attraction from a fringe group of a mainline faith did not generate revenue. Honestly did no one assigned to approve this deal do any real market research? I don't care if you believe in the young earth story, or even christianity or what have you. What I do care about is promising a town income and not producing it. What I care about is dollars promised that could have gone to better educational equipment and improvement to schools and such that will not be their. For that I am angry.

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2 ^ V • Reply • Share
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Gedoff Mylon • 4 hours ago

Lose the fucking popups that can't be closed if you want me to continue visiting this site.

SeekingBarbie → Gedoff Mylon • 2 hours ago

There are good albeit regrettable reasons for the popups and there are ways to prevent them. You would figure out both if you were actually interested in continuing to visit this site.

Jimbopbeebop McDonald → Gedoff Mylon • 3 hours ago

We don't want you. Go away.

GrFace • 4 hours ago

He got the economic boom he was told he was going to get by the people who know what they're talking about.

William Wilde • 10 hours ago

Hey Dan Arel, get a fucking sense of humor you censoring piece of shit. If you can't tell the difference between satire and stupidity, maybe you're the stupid one.

www.theraptureright.com

TOU II COMMING TOSHING THE HIGHT AGAINST TENGTON SO TONG AS YOU KEEP THAT embarrassed finger on the delete button.

Athiest's passivity and misguided battles against ten commandment statues and the pledge of allegiance, will only do nothing to elighten those living in caves. You idiots don't have a sense of humor, and you're missing out on the most powerful weapon we have against theists:

Making fun of them.

Dan Arel get a clue or The Rapture Right Youth Ministry is coming for YOU! 2 A Reply • Share

```
Albert911emt → William Wilde • an hour ago
```

William, you are a raging jackass. Take a chill pill.

```
Reply • Share >
```

Jimbopbeebop McDonald → William Wilde • 3 hours ago

Another whacko.

```
Reply • Share >
```

DeathWarmedOver → William Wilde • 7 hours ago

Got most of the frothy at the mouth Christian thing down pat. Try more caps and less proper grammar for full effect.

Spuddie → William Wilde • 9 hours ago

Why don't we play a Christian practical joke and burn you at the stake. :)

```
3 A Peply • Share
```

Dawn Renee Radford • 10 hours ago

Get a good insurance policy and introduce the Burning Bush...;-)

```
6 ^ Peply • Share
```

barbiquearea • 11 hours ago

I'm just wondering. Besides the damage being done to the local economy, could the Ark being the White Elephant that it is also cause financial problems to AIG itself? Because the cost for maintenance, upkeep, taxes and wages for the Ark has to be far greater than the Creation Museum. And that place has been losing money for years now but AIG continues to pump money into it mostly through donations. I don't think the already abysmal attendance will be enough to keep the place running for long, neither can any amount of donations AIG are able to squeeze from their flock. So yeah does anyone think AIG have a plan to turn things around or at least an exit strategy, or will this new money pit be their undoing?

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2 ^ V • Reply • Share >
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RoFaWh → barbiquearea • 2 hours ago

Maintenance? What maintenance?

Within a decade the Ark Encounter will be featured on websites about abandoned amusement parks. Maybe within five years. The first step in such a development is to defer maintenance and let things get a bit shabby, then let the roof leak a little, and gradually the place sinks of its own weight.

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∧ V • Reply • Share >
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AJOHN151 → RoFaWh • 6 minutes ago

5 years less than that. but then maybe jesus christ himself will come down to rescue it . if not it will sink in its own bullshit

barbiquearea → RoFaWh • 2 hours ago

Will this be done deliberately while the Ark is still in operation? Because I'm pretty sure there are laws against such blatant acts of neglect. Of course if Ken Ham was truly bold he could go the Euro Disneyland route. That is destroy the Ark himself either by arson or bombing and then blame it on those 'radical atheists' who have been trying to destroy the Creation Museum for years.

That way even though Ark Encounter still goes under, he will be able to save face and walk away with the insurance money while also potentially diverting all the anger for its failure on atheists living in Kentucky.

Dawn Renee Radford → barbiquearea • 10 hours ago

The deluded cash cows are still keeping Scientology afloat.

```
3 ^ V • Reply • Share
```

barbiquearea > Dawn Renee Radford • 3 hours ago

Except Scientology generally targets famous celebrities with deep pockets who can afford to give them tons of money. But creation groups such as AIG preys on the ignorant who on average have less disposal income so its a much smaller well to draw from.

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Reply • Share >
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Joseph Mullins • 20 hours ago

I live about 30 minutes from Williamstown and my mother grew up there. I understand why they were hopeful in thinking that Ken Ham the Bullshit Man would bring them a big tourist attraction. I can also appreciate their desperation in doing so. What I can't understand is why they thought anyone would pay 40 dollars to walk around a giant wooden box of lies, that is almost an hour away from the museum of lies, just to reaffirm their faith in a sky wizard.

```
9 ^ V • Reply • Share >
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Franklin Bacon • a day ago

Terribly sad for the town. I don't think there are enough Young-Earth Creationists in all of America, to supply the necessary flow of visitors. Those who are of such a persuasion never make much money in their lives, so cannot make many long trips on their own. Many have large families to feed, but these families don't all stay in that kind of faith, throughout their lives.

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1 ^ V • Reply • Share >
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Peter_Rowney • a day ago

To reach his claimed target of 2 million in the first year, means he needs 5,500 people a day, every day, for 363 days.

```
ken's going down with his ark.
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```
9 ^ V • Reply • Share >
```

Ironwoman Tasali • a day ago

5000 on opening day?

That's crap.

This is pretty fail and the taxpayers, as usual, got shafted for it.

```
10 ^ Reply • Share >
```

Susanna Sharp-Schwacke • 2 days ago

"In return for this funding, and other state rebates, such as the \$18 million sales

tax rebate, the park promised to bring in tourists, hotel development, restaurants, and more."

Time for a breach of promise suit?

```
7 A Peply • Share
```

```
lady_black → Susanna Sharp-Schwacke • 9 hours ago
```

First, you would have to convince a judge that any promises were made, and that it was reasonable to believe them.

I don't think they can make that case. Because puffery doesn't count.

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Reply • Share >
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Franklin Bacon → Susanna Sharp-Schwacke • a day ago

Who in their right mind would believe such "promises"? It's just bad planning on everyone's part.

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2 ^ V · Reply · Share ›
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```
GrFace → Franklin Bacon • 4 hours ago
```

All Ham has to do is show that independent reviewers downplayed (accurately) the ARKs numbers and Williamstown had that data. It's not his fault they believed his friend's inflated numbers.

Shannon Massman → Franklin Bacon • a day ago

Whether or not anyone actually believed the promises probably is material, but in the converse manner you mean. If the agreements were all executed on the basis of the promises, but either the people making the promises did not believe them and still provided the dishonest figures, or the people selecting the grant recipients did not believe the figures but provided the funding regardless... that sounds a lot like fraud, embezzlement, or other corruption.

Franklin Bacon → Shannon Massman • 11 hours ago

If I were to carry out such a study, the first thing I would want to learn is whether there is any interest in the project from the general public. I would want to know whether anyone would find it worthwhile to travel to it and pay the admission price. If I found only a tiny percentage of the public were interested, I could extrapolate to the rest of the population.

It sounded like a bad proposal, from the get-go. I could not figure out from where such a project would attract its patronage.

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1 ^ V • Reply • Share >
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Spirit • 2 days ago

Snicker How stupid do you have to be to travel to see this idiocy in person? I suppose it would be worthy of a laugh.... wonder how they would feel if someone with a brain showed up and pointed out every lie and inaccuracy? I could see myself literally rolling on the floor laughing my ass off. That some actually teach this crap to their children is worrisome but I supposed there will always be fools that think the earth is 6000 years old, that the sun revolves around the earth and is at the center of the universe.... SMH

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7 A Peply • Share
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```
mack - Spirit · a day ago
```

I live about an hour away from there we don't go there to make fun of it haraver that manner you are naving to get in TATA dan't want to give these pecause that means you are paying to get in. we don't want to give these lairs any more of or money.

```
6 A V • Reply • Share >
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Aria Clements → Spirit • a day ago

I don't know this first-hand, but have heard that people have been kicked out of the Creation Museum for doing this.

```
2 ^ Peply • Share
```

2patricius2 • 2 days ago

I wonder what will happen to the leaders of the town when Ken Ham declares bankruptcy and defaults on his commitments to the town.

Also, I am surprised no one has noticed the story of Ham in the Book of Genesis in which Noah got drunk and became uncovered in his tent, and his young son Ham walked in and noticed and told his brothers about it - apparently making fun of his father. They covered their father up. But when Noah woke up and realized what Ham had done, he cursed him. Ironic that the builder of the Noah's Ark project has the same name as the accursed son.

```
8DX → 2patricius2 • 2 days ago
```

As far as I remember the original text is ambiguous about this as the story may quite well have been about Ham having sex with his drunk dad..

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2 A Peply • Share
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```
Ironwoman Tasali → 8DX • a day ago
Oh yay, the holy book!
```

```
2 ^ Reply • Share >
```

Gary Burnaska • 2 days ago

It will be a boom when the Ark sinks, (metaphorically) and becomes the perfect location for any low or medium budget slasher or Apocalypse zombie movie. You will get all that need for catering services, hotels and restaurants will see increased business. Ham's Ark is nothing more than a high priced sanctified tourist trap, like Kent Hovnid I will not be surprised if this ends with Ham behind bars in a Federal Prison for tax evasion and fraud.

```
4 ^ V • Reply • Share >
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Spuddie - Gary Burnaska • 9 hours ago

I don't even think Justified was shot in Kentucky and that show took place

pagansister • 2 days ago

Guess the mayor has that sinking feeling that they made a huge mistake allowing this sham!

```
3 ^ V • Reply • Share >
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RoFaWh → pagansister • 2 hours ago

Look, he's a municipal politician and by definition something of a simp. As such, he is prone to mistaking wishful thinking for serious evidence-based extrapolation, leading to fiascos like the Ark Encounter. Happens all the time.

```
Reply • Share >
```

```
pagansister → RoFaWh • 2 hours ago
```

Of course he isn't the first municipal politician to mess up with decisions on big things.

```
✓ • Reply • Share ›
```

Philacook • 2 days ago

I guess Ham and his scam aren't able to cut the mustard.

```
3 A Peply • Share
```

Raging Bee → Philacook • 12 hours ago

There's no mention of mustard in the Bible!

```
Reply • Share >
```

lady_black → Raging Bee • 9 hours ago

Yes there is. Mustard is a spice. It may not have been what we think of as "mustard" but it is mentioned.

GalapagosPete → lady_black • 6 hours ago

Only Yellow is the True Mustard! All else is blasphemy!

```
1 ^ V • Reply • Share >
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Spuddie → Raging Bee • 9 hours ago

Aren't they the littlest of seeds or some bullshit parable for impressionable children.

```
2 ^ Reply • Share >
```

Raging Bee - Spuddie • 6 hours ago

Mustard for impressionable children? Sounds sadistic. I like

```
1 ^ V • Reply • Share >
```

Spuddie → Raging Bee • 6 hours ago

Matthew 13:32

- Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown,

the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the

air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

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Reply • Share >
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John McCue • 2 days ago

As much as I enjoy this train wreck should we ignore Ham's ill conceived venture until winter to avoid giving him free advertising?

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1 ^ V • Reply • Share >
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DominicBruysPorter • 2 days ago

Everyone's missing the real tragedy. This boat will never float. At more than 900 feet above sea level there literally isn't enough water on the planet to flood Williamsburg. Best we can manage is 220 or so, with both poles becoming liquid. So unless god wants to add tremendously to the mass of earth, no great flood will ever pick Ham's woody up off its moorings.

Looking at the numbers I honestly wonder how one schmuck and his family could have afforded to build this thing, within their lifetimes no less. That idea sounds like pretty reasonable grounds for a film actually. I'd watch that; seeing the evolution of the design over thirty years of construction, family members coming and going, negotiating with his neighbours for their timber, play it like it actually happened, without any fire breathing rock giants, might be a fun little flick. The payoff at the end is that even though it's not complete when the flood hits, it's fine because really, there was plenty of landmass left for all the ground creatures and flying creatures. And then God's all like "You have passed my test!" Noah in reply

"dafuq? The least you could have done was make it float! My whole life for some horses! You flying shit!" God again: "not my fault you decided to build it on a landlocked hill, did you really expect me to flood the whole planet?" Noah, now really confused "What the shit is a planet?"

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The hidden base that could have ended the world

By Richard Hollingham / Images by Chris Hinkle 1 August 2016

bbc.com

In the 1970s and 80s, crews sat at constant readiness in nuclear missile silos buried in the Arizona desert. What would have happened if they had got the order to launch?



Yvonne Morris had three minutes to get to work at the start of her shift. Any longer between phoning through

her secret

code at the perimeter gate and descending a set of stairs and she would have been arrested, at the very least.

Morris was one of the first female crew commanders of a Titan 2 nuclear missile silo. Stationed with the 390th Strategic Missile Wing in Tucson, Arizona between 1980 and 1984, she was responsible for three other crew members and a nine-megaton nuclear weapon.

"Even though our primary mission was peace through deterrence by preventing World War Three," she says, "in the event we failed, we had to be ready to launch at all times in retaliation."



(Credit: Chris Hinkle)

From ground level, there's little to hint at what lies underneath (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

From the early 1960s to the mid-80s, the city of Tucson was circled by 18 Titan 2 nuclear missile silos. Their location meant this would have been a prime Soviet target. Today, only one silo remains preserved as the Titan Missile Museum, a national monument with Morris as director. Time stopped here in 1982, preserving the site -

complete with decommissioned missile – as a chilling reminder of Cold War preparations for the end of the world.

"The three minutes to get to the silo is a built in security protocol," Morris explains. "If we didn't make it in three minutes, the crew underground assumes there is some sort of security situation topside."

Crews came on duty for 24-hour shifts, or alerts, and began the day with a top secret security briefing at nearby Davis-Monthan airbase. It was a snapshot of the state of the world.

"I have to tell you, I slept better when I was on crew than I did today," says Morris. "We were given excellent security briefings and so most days when I was driving out to the missile site, I was able to say to myself 'today's probably not going to be the day'."



(Credit: Chris Hinkle)

Yvonne Morris was the commander in charge of the missile silo (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

"That doesn't mean," she adds,
"things can't change in the blink of
an eye, but in order to be effective at
your job you have to let the
possibility of Armageddon sit at the
back of your brain."

Half-a-mile or so from the main highway south to Mexico, the silo lies beneath a low mound

surrounded by desert. The dusty slopes are dotted with cactus plants and there are signs warning of the danger of rattlesnakes. On the surface there is little to see behind the barbed-wire fence except a few low metal structures, the concrete launch doors, aerials and a staircase that disappears into the ground.

"A Titan 2 missile site is a lot like an iceberg," says Morris. "Only about 10% of it is visible at the surface, the rest is underground."

After descending the first flight of stairs, Morris would phone the control centre again. "They would release an electronic lock on the door and I'd pass into the entrapment area – really just a flight of stairs with a door at the top and bottom where I'd phone again with the entry code of the day."



(Credit: Chris Hinkle)

The control room has an array of analogue switches and dials (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

"They're looking on CCTV to make sure I'm the only person there, that no-one is in there with me holding a gun to my head."

The silo proper begins 10 metres underground behind a solid steel and concrete blast door. Hanging on two giant hinges, this 6,000lb (2.7 tonne) door is a foot (30cm) thick

and twice the width of a regular doorway, but so well engineered you can push it open with a finger.

The entire floor is mounted on giant shock absorbers and the light fittings hang on springs to cushion the effects of an attack

"From this point on we're entering the hardened portion of the missile site – designed to withstand the effects of a nearby nuclear strike," says Morris. "We weren't designed to take a direct hit."

The tunnel beyond is lined with metal girders, slung with rows of cables, and resembles the interior of a battleship or submarine. It leads to the launch control centre – a circular room with racks of equipment, vintage computer terminals, dials and switches. In the middle, a control console with a row of lights with a chair bolted to the floor in front of it.



(Credit: Chris Hinkle)

The crew had their own rest area, buried beneath the soil (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

"They wanted to put in substantial chairs for the two officers on the crew," says Morris, "so they could ride out the shockwave of a nearby nuclear strike and still do their job." In fact, the entire floor is mounted on giant shock absorbers and the light fittings hang on springs to cushion the effects of an attack.

At the back of the room is a red safe: the war safe. It contains the authenticator cards, with the codes needed to validate launch orders from the US president. The safe is secured by two combination padlocks belonging to the officers on duty. The crew coming off duty would swap their padlocks with the new crew. Only the individuals knew the four-digit combinations.

You don't want to give a single person access to the control room because you don't want to give a single person the opportunity to launch the missile – Yvonne Morris

"It's a pin number you have to be able to remember under extreme stress," says Morris. "How many times have you been in line at the grocery store and can't remember your pin? We have to be able to remember this code in a war situation."

The floor above the control room has a rest area with bunks, kitchen and toilet. This is the only place in the complex where crew members were allowed on their own. Elsewhere they always had to be in sight of another crew member.

The control room was designed to survive the blast from a nearby nuclear strike (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

"The 'no lone zone' security process is a part of maintaining positive control of the nuclear weapon," Morris explains. "You don't want to give a single person access to the control room because you don't want to give a single person the opportunity to launch the missile."

This order led to some near farcical situations. For instance, the last duty any crew had to perform as part of their shift was to vacuum the 70s-era orange carpet in the control centre. The vacuum cleaner was stored behind the main control cabinets and retrieving it involved one person getting



(Credit: Chris Hinkle)

the cleaner, another person standing at the edge of the equipment racks and a third in the centre of the room. All ensuring they could see each other at all times.

What made the Titan 2 such an effective deterrent was its ability to launch in 58 seconds

In any normal shift, the primary duty of the crew was to check and maintain all the equipment in the silo, from the carpet to the missile

itself – located 250 feet (76 metres) away at the end of another metal corridor, known as the long cableway.

The two-stage Titan 2 missile rises some seven storeys and has US Air Force helpfully painted on its side. The black casing at the top encloses the warhead, or re-entry vehicle (RV). Today it is empty but Morris remembers when, as a lieutenant on the crew, she saw it for the first time.



Crew members had to be within sight of each other at all times (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

"The commander always arranged for a new crew member to perform an RV inspection on their first alert so they would come face to face with the missile," Morris recalls. "So I'm nervous, I'm walking around and I saw that it had the manufacturer's plate, General Electric, stamped on it."

"There was a GE advert at the time which had the slogan 'we bring good things to life' and I couldn't stop laughing," she says. It was not the reaction the commander was hoping for. (You can watch one of the adverts here.)

If the worst happened, the first the crew would know about it would be a warbling klaxon sounding around the silo

What made the Titan 2 such an effective deterrent was its ability to launch in 58 seconds. The logic of Mutually Assured Destruction (Mad) depended on being able to respond to an enemy threat. "We both had enough missiles to destroy each other several times over and had the ability to detect a first strike and retaliate before that first strike would hit us," says Morris. "The missiles would pass each other in the air like ships in the night, blow up both countries so there're no survivors or anyone left to celebrate victory." You can see why they called it Mad.

If the worst happened, the first the crew would know about it would be a warbling klaxon sounding around the silo. If they heard that, they all needed to run to the control centre to for a coded message broadcast from Strategic Air Command in Nebraska. There could be many reasons for the alarm to sound – a change of target, an increase in security procedures or the command from the President to launch the missile.



The underground base required its own rules and regulations (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

The message was broadcast as a series of letters and numbers, which the commander and deputy checked against a code book. If the codes indicated launch, they further authenticated them against the launch cards in the safe (which was protected by the two combination padlocks).

(Credit: Chris Hinkle)

A code to unlock the missile had to be dialed into six thumbwheels of 16 numbers each on the equipment racks. The missile was launched by two separate keys (also kept in the safe), turned simultaneously and held for five seconds by the commander and deputy. Located on separate consoles, there is no way they could be operated by one person.

It would have been impossible to start World War Three by accident.

"Once the launch sequence is initiated, the commander follows a row of lights on their console," explains Morris. "From launch enable, silo soft – which means the silo door is open – guidance go, fire engine, lift off."

I'm 99.999% sure I would have done it – Yvonne Morris

And that is it.

Sealed in their control room, the crew would not even hear the launch. So would Morris have turned the key?

"I'm 99.999% sure I would have done it," she says. "My entire family lives in the foothills of Virginia, about 100 miles south of Washington DC, so by the time I get the launch order if they're not already dead, they're going to be dead soon.

The Titan missile could launch in as little as 58 seconds (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

"Life as I know it is over, when we get the launch order every horrible thing you've thought about Armageddon is about to happen and there was a part of me that was very motivated by the desire for retribution."

By the time of launch, the crew themselves were only likely to survive a few minutes longer. The silo was not designed for a direct hit but – given that the Soviet Union knew exactly where they were – a missile was almost certainly on its way.



(Credit: Chris Hinkle)



(Credit: Chris Hinkle)

The silo is left exactly as it was when it was decommissioned in 1982 (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

"The flight time between the Soviet Union and the US is 30 minutes," says Morris. "Depending when we receive our launch order, that's going to determine how much longer we have to live."

The museum doesn't advocate a position on nuclear weapons but we provide a framework for people to make up their own mind – Yvonne Morris

Today, the silo is exactly how it was left in 1982. The Titan Missile Museum runs tours through the complex and you can stand at the top of the missile silo and look down through the duct.

For those of us who grew up during the Cold War, with the threat of nuclear conflict hanging over us, the silo remains a memorial to

humanity's ability to bring civilisation to an end. As relevant today as ever.



(Credit: Chris Hinkle)

it can cause."

The base serves as a reminder of the unblinking, round-the-clock readiness of a nuclear deterrent (Credit: Chris Hinkle)

"The museum doesn't advocate a position on nuclear weapons but we provide a framework for people to make up their own mind," says Morris. "This missile site is playing just as an important role today because it remains the clearest, most accessible demonstration of the technology and the devastation

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Tree still in chains after drunk officer ordered its arrest in 1898

metro.co.uk

Jen Mills for Metro.co.ukWednesday 7 Sep 2016 3:44 pm



Tree still in chains after drunk officer ordered its arrest in 1898

That'll teach it (Picture: Facebook)

In Peshawar, Pakistan, you can find a banyan tree draped in chains and tethered to the ground.

It has a plaque attached to it explaining the history behind it – and at first you might think it was making a serious point about slavery or oppression in the past.

But actually, the reality is gloriously bizarre and this is what you will read if you get close enough:

'I AM UNDER ARREST.'

One evening a British officer, heavily drunk, thought that I was moving from my original location and ordered

Mess Sergeant to arrest me. Since then I am under arrest'

James Squid, a British army officer, ordered the tree to be arrested one day when he got so drunk he thought it was trying to run away.

A sergeant did his bidding, and sadly for the tree, it has remained bound for more than 100 years at the Khyber Rifles Officers Mess at Landi Kotal way. (Not that it would have moved somewhere else, even so.)

MORE: Climber scales Europe's highest mountain, finds lost dog at the top

MORE: We thought we had heard every single excuse for a delayed train – until now

The colonial hangover has now become a tourist attraction.

But according to Pakistani newspaper the Express Tribune, not everyone finds it so hilarious.

'Through this act, the British basically implied to the tribesmen that if they dared act against the Raj, they too would be punished in a similar fashion,' a local resident said.

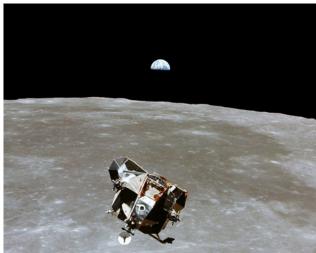
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How government officials mistakenly sold artifacts from Apollo 11

csmonitor.com

The bag used by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin to collect the first samples of lunar rock was accidentally sold at a government auction last year.

By Joseph Dussault, Staff August 7, 2016



NASA/Reuters View Caption

The Apollo 11 Lunar Module ascent stage, with astronauts Neil A. Armstrong and Edwin E. Aldrin Jr. aboard, is photographed from the Command and Service Modules in lunar orbit in this July, 1969 file photo.

Nearly 50 years after the first lunar landing, an artifact from the Apollo 11 mission has become the center of a new legal dispute.

Federal prosecutors are seeking to

recover a white sample bag that had been used on the Apollo 11 lunar landing. The bag was collected in a criminal investigation against Max Ary, founder and former director of the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center, and mistakenly sold at a government auction in 2015.

Government officials called the bag "a rare artifact, if not a national treasure," the Associated Press reports.

On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first people to walk on the moon. They used the bag in question to collect the first samples of lunar rock.

In 2005, Mr. Ary was convicted of stealing and selling hundreds of space artifacts, many on loan from NASA to the Cosmosphere. Investigators discovered the lunar bag during a search of Ary's garage in 2003.

More than a decade later, the bag was sold at a government auction to Nancy Carlson, an Illinois resident. Carlson purchased the bag for \$995 and later shipped it to NASA's Johnson Space Center for authentication. NASA, who had apparently not been notified of the bag's sale, withheld the artifact. In June, Carlson sued the agency in an Illinois federal court, seeking the bag's return.

Federal prosecutors have asked the federal judge who handled Ary's case to rescind the sale and refund Carlson.

Officials say the confusion stems from an internal clerical error, in which two separate lunar bags were given the same inventory identification number. The other was a sample bag from the most recent lunar mission, Apollo 17, launched in 1972. In 2001, Ary auctioned the second bag for over \$20,000. It was later recovered by investigators.

In 2006, Ary was sentenced to three years in prison and ordered to pay over \$130,000 in restitution. In 2008, he made an unsuccessful bid to appeal his conviction. Ary was released on good behavior

in 2010, having served about 70 percent of his sentence. He has consistently maintained innocence, claiming that he accidentally mixed museum artifacts with items from his private collection.

This report contains material from the Associated Press.

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The Christian Science Monitor

Tim Wetzel, KHOU6:01 PM. CDT August 11, 2016



Houston artist Wayne Gilbert uses unclaimed human remains in some of his artwork. (Photo: KHOU)

HOUSTON -- Wayne Gilbert's studio in the Heights is filled with all sorts of artwork, but his most prized paintings aren't just made from paint.

Gilbert uses cremated human remains that have been abandoned in funeral homes.

"I was driving on the 610 Loop one day and the idea crossed my mind: I can use human remains," Gilbert said.

So for the past decade, he's mixed human ashes with a gel to create unique colors and textures. He uses the material to create dozens of paintings that now hang in his gallery, studio and warehouse.

Gilbert recognizes that some people might find his artwork bizarre or weird, but he says that's part of the point.



Gilbert says he mixes human ashes with a gel to create unique colors and textures.

"The minute somebody says, 'Did you know there's different human being remains in there?' Pow, the game changes and the conversation becomes a whole new game," Gilbert said.

With few exceptions, he refuses to sell the artwork. He says he's been offered lots of money for certain pieces, but has turned the offers down

Gilbert defends his use of ashes in art, saying he treats the remains with the

utmost respect.

"(Some) might have a negative response," Gilbert said. "When they begin to think about the possibility that these people could be here for eternity rather than in a trash bin, they soften up quite a bit."



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Mum-to-be's ultrasound picture looks like a BUNNY

15:35, 27 Aug 2016 Updated 15:57, 27 Aug 2016 By Matthew Abbot

mirror.co.uk



The little bun-ny in the oven

A proud mum-to-be has posted an incredible picture of her ultrasound scan that looks uncannily like a RABBIT.

The shocked woman from Florida in the US shared the bizarre picture showing the profile of a tiny rabbit-shaped foetus - with little bunny ears sticking up and four legs - on social media.

Underneath, she wrote: "Went for my first ultrasound today... turns out I'm having a

bunny."

The expectant mum posted the picture onto reddit under the user name NetteFraulein.

The 33-year-old, who does not want to be named, said: "I thought it was funny.

"I was nervous because we have lost two in the past so I was relieved when I saw the heart beat at 163 (indicating a healthy heart rate).

The resemblance to a rabbit is incredible

"Went for my first ultrasound today... turns out I'm having a bunny" File picture

"Then we noticed it was a bunny and had a good laugh about it.

"This was the seven week ultrasound so the baby is due in April about a week before Christmas."

One user quipped: 'You do realise the expression 'At it like rabbits' is not supposed to be taken literally."

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The Archaeological and Historical Evidence for the Aztec Homeland

By Nicoletta Maestri Archaeology Expert

about.com



Migration of Aztecs to Tenochtitlan, drawing from Boturini Codex manuscript, Mexico, 16th century - DEA / G. DAGLI ORTI / Getty Images

The migration of the Aztecs to Tenochtitlan, drawing from the Boturini Codex manuscript. Mexico, 16th century. DEA / G. DAGLI ORTI / Getty Images

By Nicoletta Maestri

Updated August 13, 2016.

Aztlán (spelled Aztlan or sometimes Aztalan) is the name of the mythical homeland of the Aztecs, the ancient Mesoamerican civilization also known as the Mexica. According to their origin myth, the Mexica left Aztlan at the behest of their god/ruler Huitzilopochtli, to find a new home in the Valley of Mexico. In the Nahua language, Aztlan means "the place of whiteness" or "the place of the heron".

What Aztlan Was Like

According to the stories, Aztlan was a luxurious and delightful place located on a large lake, where everybody was immortal and lived happily among abundant resources. There was a steep hill called Colhuacan in the middle of the lake, and in the hill were caves and caverns known collectively as Chicomoztoc, where the ancestors of the Aztec lived. The land was filled with vast quantities of ducks, heron and waterfowl; red and yellow birds sang incessantly; great and beautiful fish swam in the waters and shade trees lined the banks.

At Aztlan, the people fished from canoes and tended their floating gardens of maize, peppers, beans, amaranth and tomatoes. But when they left their homeland, everything turned against them, the weeds bit them, the rocks wounded them, the fields were filled with thistles and spines. They wandered in a land filled with vipers, poisonous lizards and dangerous wild animals before reaching their home to build their place of destiny, Tenochtitlan.

Aztlán: Myth or Historic Place?

The story of the Aztec migration from Aztlan is narrated in several of the remaining books left by the Aztecs, called codexes, in particular the codex Boturini o Tira de la Peregrinacion. It was also reported as oral history by several Spanish chroniclers including Bernal Diaz del Castillo, Diego Duran and Bernardino de Sahagun.

Modern scholars have long debated whether Aztlán was a real place or simply a myth. The Mexica told the Spanish that their ancestors had reached the Valley of Mexico about 300 years before, after having left their homeland, traditionally located far north of Tenochtitlan.

In Aztlán, the myth goes, the Mexica ancestors dwelled in place with seven caves called Chicomoztoc (Chee-comoz-toch). Each cave corresponded to one of the Nahuatl tribes which would later leave that place to reach, in successive waves, the Valley of Mexico. These tribes, listed with slight differences from source to source, were the Xochimilca, Chalca, Tepaneca, Colhua, Tlahuica, Tlaxcala and the group who were to become the Mexica.

Oral and written accounts also mention that the Mexica and the other Nahuatl groups were preceded in their migration by another group, collectively known as Chichimecas, who migrated from north to Central Mexico some time earlier, and were considered by the Nahua people less civilized.

The Migration

The migration tales are full of stories of the battles and interventions of the gods in the journey. Like all origin myths, the earliest events blend natural and supernatural, but the tales that occur as they neared the Basin of Mexico are less mystical. Stories included in the journey describe how the moon goddess Coyolxauhqui and her 400 star brothers attempted to kill Huitzilopochtli (the sun) at the sacred mountain of Coatepec.

Archaeology and historical linguistics support the occurrence of multiple in-migrations to the basin of Mexico from northern Mexico and/or the southeastern United States between 1100 and 1300 AD. That evidence includes the introduction of new ceramic types in central Mexico, and the fact that the Nahuatl language, the language spoken by the Aztec/Mexica, is not original to Central Mexico.

Moctezuma's Search

Aztlan was a source of fascination for the Aztecs themselves. The Spanish chroniclers and codexes report that the Mexica king Moctezuma Ilhuicamina (ruled 1502-1520) sent an expedition to search for the mythical homeland. Sixty elderly sorcerers and magicians were assembled by Moctezuma for the trip, and given gold, precious stones, mantles, feathers, cacao, vanilla and cotton from the royal storehouses to be used as gifts to the ancestors. The sorcerers left Tenochtitlan and within 10 days arrived at Coatepec, where they transformed themselves into birds and animals and journeyed to Aztlan, where they re-assumed their human form.

At Aztlan the sorcerers found a hill in the middle of a lake, where the inhabitants spoke Nahuatl. The sorcerers were taken to the hill where they met an old man who was the priest and guardian of the goddess Coatlicue. The old man took them to the sanctuary of Coatlicue, where they met an ancient woman who said she was the mother of Huitzilipochtli and had suffered greatly since he left. He had promised to return, she said, but never had. People in Aztlan could choose their age, said Coatlicue: they were immortal. The reason the people in Tenochtitlan died was because they consumed cacao and other luxury items. The old man refused the gold and precious goods, saying "these things have ruined you", and gave the sorcerers waterfowl and plants native to Aztlan and maguey fiber cloaks and breechcloths to take back with them. The sorcerers transformed themselves back into animals and returned to Tenochtitlan.

Modern Aztlan

In modern Chicano culture, Aztlán represents an important symbol of spiritual and national unity, and it has been often paralleled to the territories ceded to the United States by Mexico with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848.

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This glossary entry is a part of the About.com guide to Aztec Civilization, and the Dictionary of Archaeology.

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Updated by K. Kris Hirst

Aztecs or Mexica? What is the Proper Name for the Ancient Empire?

Why We Shouldn't Call Mexico's Ancient Civilization the Aztec Empire The Founding of Tenochtitlan, from the Codex Duran. Jedi Knight 1970 By Nicoletta Maestri

By Nicoletta Maestri

Despite its popular use, the term "Aztec" when used to refer to the Triple Alliance founders of Tenochtitlan and the empire that ruled over ancient Mexico from AD 1428 to 1521, is sadly incorrect.

History of the Use of "Aztecs"



The Founding of Tenochtitlan, from the Codex Duran - Jedi Knight 1970

None of the historical records of the participants in the Spanish Conquest refer to "Aztecs"; not the conquistadors Hernán Cortés or Bernal Díaz del Castillo, not even the famed chronicler of the Aztecs, Franciscan friar Bernardino Sahagún. Instead, this word was first used by the 18th century Jesuit teacher of New Spain, Francisco Javier Clavijero Echegaray, who wrote an important work on the Aztecs called *La Historia Antiqua de México*.

The term reached popularity in the 19th century when it was used by the famous German explorer Alexander Von Humboldt in his adventures published after his 1804 journey to

Mexico. The term became cemented into the culture in the English language in William Prescott's book "The History of the Conquest of Mexico", published in 1843.

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4 Tips for Improving Test Performance

The Origins of the Aztec Name

The term Aztecs has some historical foundation, however, since it derives from Aztlan, the legendary homeland of the Mexica people. According to Mexica origin mythology, the Mexica originally called themselves the Aztlaneca or Azteca, the people from Aztlan. When the Toltec empire crumbled, the Azteca left Aztlan, and during their wanderings they arrived in Teo Culhuacan (old or Divine Culhuacan). There they met eight other wandering tribes and acquired their patron god Huitzilopochtli, also known as Mexi. Huitzilopochtli told the Azteca that they should change their name to Mexica, and since they were his chosen people, they should leave Teo Culhuacan to continue their journey to their rightful location--central Mexico.

Support for the main plot points of the Mexica origin myth is found in archaeological, linguisitic and historical sources. Those sources say the Mexica were the last of several tribes who left northern Mexico between the 12th and 13th centuries, moving southward to settle in Central Mexico.

Read more about Aztlan and the Aztec/Mexica origins

Names of the Mexica

There are numerous ethnic groups who could be designated as Mexica, mostly named from their towns. The inhabitants of Tenochtitlan called themelves the Tenochca; those of Tlateloloco called themselves Tlatelolca. Collectively, these two main forces in the Basin of Mexico called themselves the Mexica.

Then there are the founding tribes of the Mexica, including the Aztecas, as well as the Tlascaltecas, Xochimilcas, Heuxotzincas, Tlahuicas, Chalcas, and Tapanecas, all of whom moved into the Valley of Mexico after the Toltec Empire crumbled.

So--What Does Aztec Mean?

Aztec, therefore, is an ambiguous name which doesn't truly define historically either a group of people or a culture or a language. Mexica is the proper term that should be used to refer to the people who left Aztlan and in 1325 founded the twin settlements of Tenonchtitlan and Tlatelolco in the Basin of Mexico, *or* the descendants of this group, who inhabited these cities and that from 1428 were the leaders of the empire which ruled over ancient Mexico until the arrival of the Europeans.

But we can't really let go of the Aztec terminology: it's simply too ingrained in the language and history of Mexico to be discarded. We can use Mexica to refer to inhabitants of the Basin of Mexico, or, less precisely, the heart of the ruling cities of the Aztec Empire itself. Smith (2013) has suggested that we use the term Aztecs to include

not just the Basin of Mexico Triple Alliance leadership but also people who lived in the nearby valleys. He chose to use Aztecs to refer to all of the people who claimed to have come from the mythical place of Aztlan, which include several million people divided into about 20 or so ethnic groups. After the Spanish Conquest, he switches to the term Nahuas, from the shared language Nahuatl.

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Updated by K. Kris Hirst

Nahuatl

The Language of the Aztec/Mexica By Nicoletta Maestri

By Nicoletta Maestri

Náhuatl (pronounced NAH-wah-tuhl) was the language spoken by the Aztec/Mexica, and it is still spoken today by thousands of people, mainly in Central Mexico.

Nahuatl's Origins

Náhuatl is part of the Uto-Aztecan family, one of the largest Native American linguistic families. The Uto-Aztecan, or Uto-Nahuan, family includes many North American languages such as Comanche, Shoshone, Paiute, as well as Tarahumara, Cora, and Huichol in Mexico. The Nahuatl language probably originated in what is now Southwestern US.

Náhuatl is considered one of the southernmost members of the family and its speakers are believed to have entered Mesoamerica and reached Central Mexico sometimes around AD 400/500, during the Classic period.

According to historical and archaeological sources, the Mexica were among the last of the Náhuatl speakers to migrate from the north and reach Central Mexico.

• Read more about Aztec/Mexica migration and their original homeland, Aztlan.

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10 Best Universities in the United States

Náhuatl Distribution under the Aztec/Mexica Empire

With the founding of their capital, Mexico-Tenochtitlan, and the growth of the Aztec/Mexica empire in the 15th and 16th centuries, Náhuatl spread all over Mesoamerica. This language became a *lingua franca* spoken all over the empire by merchants, soldiers and diplomats, over an area including what is today northern Mexico to Costa Rica, and Lower Central America.

Náhuatl in Colonial Times

After the conquest, many Spanish friars learned Náhuatl as a way to both access the indigenous sources, and therefore know better their traditional beliefs and histories in order to eradicate them, as well as to translate Catholic religious texts and therefore diffuse Catholicism in the indigenous language.

The most extensive source on Náhuatl language is the book written in the mid-16th century, by friar Bernardino de Sahagún called the *Historia General de la Nueva España*, included in the Florentine Codex. In its 12 books Sahagun and his assistants collected a sort of encyclopedia about the language and culture of the Aztec/Mexica. This text contains parts written both in Spanish and Náhuatl transliterated in latin characters, since Náhuatl used a pictographic writing system.

Náhuatl Legacy

Náhuatl was a language spoken by thousands of people in Mesoamerica and this culture left the majority of the pre-Hispanic and colonial documents until now survived. Furthermore, many contemporary place namea in Mexico and Central America are the result of a Spanish transliteration of their Náhuatl name (i.e. Mexico, Guatemala). Finally, many Nahuatl words have passed into the English dictionary through Spanish, such as coyote, chocolate, tomato, chili, cacao, avocado and many others.

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Aztec Origins and the Founding of Tenochtitlan

The Mythology of the Aztecs and the Founding of Tenochtitlan



Mexico's Coat of Arms - Mexican Government

Mexico's Coat of Arms features an eagle on top of a cactus with a snake in its mouth: Aztec symbolism for the founding of Tenochtitlan/Mexico City.

By Nicoletta Maestri

Updated August 09, 2016.

The origins of the Aztec Empire are part legend, part archaeological and historical fact. When the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés arrived in Basin of Mexico in 1517, he found that the Aztec Triple Alliance, a strong political, economic and military pact, controlled the basin and indeed much of central America. But where did they come from, and how did they get to be so powerful?

The Origins of the Aztecs

The Aztecs, or Mexica as they called themselves, were not originally from the Valley of Mexico, but rather migrated from the north. They called their homeland Aztlan, "The Place of Herons.", a location that has not been identified archaelogically and is believed to be a mythical island. Historically, the Mexica and other tribes located in northern Mexico and the southwestern United States, known as the Chichimeca, left their homes because of a great drought. This story is told in several surviving codices (painted folding books), in which the Mexica are shown carrying with them the idol of their patron deity Huitzilopochtli.

continue reading below our video

Test Your General Science Knowledge

After two centuries of migration, at around AD 1250, the Mexica arrived in the Valley of Mexico.

Today, the Basin of Mexico is filled with the sprawling metropolis of Mexico City; but underneath the modern streets are the ruins of Tenochtitlán, the site where the Mexica settled, and the capital city for the Aztec empire.

Basin of Mexico Before the Aztecs

When the Aztecs arrived in the Valley of Mexico, it was far from an empty place. Because of its wealth of natural resources, the valley has been continuously occupied for millennia. The Valley of Mexico lies ~2,100 meters (7,000 feet) above sea level, and it is surrounded by high mountains, some of which are active volcanoes. Water coursing down in streams from these mountains created a series of shallow, marshy lakes that provided a rich source for animals and fish, plants, salt and water for cultivation. Today this area is almost completely covered by the monstrous expansion of Mexico City: but there were ancient ruins as well as thriving communities when the Aztecs arrived.

- **Teotihuacán:** Almost a thousand years before the Aztecs, the city of Teotihuacán (between 200 BC and AD 750) flourished there. Today Teotihuacan is a popular archaeological site a few miles north of modern Mexico City that attracts thousands of tourists each year. The word Teotihuacán is a Nahuatl (the language spoken by the Aztecs) meaning "The Birthplace of the Gods." We don't know its real name, but the Aztecs gave this name to the city because it was a sacred place associated with the legendary origins of the world.
- **Tula**: Another city that developed in the Valley of Mexico before the Aztecs was the city of Tula, the capital of the Toltecs between AD 950 and 1150. The Toltecs were considered by the Aztecs as brave warriors who excelled in the arts and sciences. Tula was so revered by the Aztecs that the king Motecuhzoma (aka Montezuma) sent people to dig up Toltec objects for use in the temples at Tenochtitlán.

Aztec Arrival in Tenochtitlán

When the Mexica arrived in the Valley of Mexico about 1200, both Teotihuacán and Tula had been abandoned for centuries but other groups were already settled on the best land. These were groups of Chichimecs, related to the Mexica, who had migrated from the north in earlier times. The Mexica were forced to settle on the inhospitable hill of Chapultepec, or Grasshopper Hill. They became vassals of the city of Culhuacan, a prestigious city whose rulers were considered the heirs of the Toltecs. As acknowledgement for their assistance in battle, the Mexica were given one of the daughters of the King of Culhuacan to be worshipped as a goddess/priestess. When the king arrived to attend the ceremony, he found one of the Mexica priests dressed in the flayed skin of his daughter: the Mexica reported to the king that their God Huitzilopochtli had asked for the sacrifice of the princess.

The sacrifice and flaying of the Culhua Princess provoked a ferocious battle, which the Mexica lost. They were forced to leave Chapultepec and move to some marshy islands in the middle of the lake.

Tenochtitlán: Living in a Marshland

After they were forced out of Chapultepec, according to Mexica myth, the Aztecs wandered for weeks, searching for a place to settle. Huitzilopochtli appeared to the Mexica leaders and indicated a place where a great eagle was perched on a cactus killing a snake. This place, smack dab in the middle of a marsh with no proper ground at all, was where the Mexica founded their capital, Tenochtitlán. The year was 2 *Calli* (Two House) in the Aztec calendar, which translates to AD 1325.

The apparently unfortunate position of their city, in the middle of a marsh, actually facilitated economic connections and protected Tenochtitlán from military attacks by restricting access to the site by canoe or boat traffic. Tenochtitlán rapidly grew as a commercial and military center. The Mexica were skillful and fierce soldiers and, despite the story of the Culhua princess, they were also able politicians who created solid alliances with the surrounding cities.

Growing a Home in the Basin

The city grew rapidly, with palaces and well-organized residential areas and aqueducts providing fresh water to the city from the mountains. At the center of the city stood the sacred precinct with ball courts, schools for nobles, and priests' quarters. The ceremonial heart of the city and of the whole empire was the Great Temple of

Mexico-Tenochtitlán, known as the Templo Mayor or *Huey Teocalli* (the Great House of the Gods). This was a stepped pyramid with a double temple on top dedicated to Huitzilopochtli and Tlaloc, the main deities of the Aztecs.

The temple, decorated with bright colors, was rebuilt many times during Aztec history. The seventh and final version was seen and described by Hernán Cortés and the conquistadors. When Cortés and his soldiers entered the Aztec capital on November 8, 1519, they found one of the largest cities in the world.

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Updated by K. Kris Hirst

Coatepec - The Sacred Mountain of the Aztecs

Mythical Birthplace of the Aztec Sun God Huitzilopochtli



Colossal Head of Aztec Moon Goddess Coyolxauhqui, discovered at Tenochtitlan - De Agostino / Archivo J. Lange / Getty Images

Colossal Head of Aztec Moon Goddess Coyolxauhqui, discovered at Tenochtitlan. De Agostino / Archivo J. Lange / Getty Images

By Nicoletta Maestri

Updated June 20, 2016

Coatepec, also known as Cerro Coatepec or Serpent Mountain and pronounced roughly "coe-WAH-teh-peck", was one of the most sacred places of Aztec mythology and religion. The name is derived from the Nahuatl (Aztec language) words coatl, serpent, and tepetl, mountain. Coatepec was the site of the main Aztec origin myth, that of the violent birth of the Aztec/Mexica patron deity Huitzilopochtli, a myth bloody enough to be worthy of a Quentin Tarentino movie.

According to the version of the story told in the Florentine Codex, Huitzilopochtli's mother Coatlicue ("She of the Serpent Skirt") conceived the god miraculously when she was doing penance by sweeping out a temple. Her daughter Coyolxauhqui (goddess of the moon) and her 400 other siblings ("400" means "legion" in Aztec and the 400 siblings are sometimes referred to as an "army of stars") disapproved of the pregnancy and together conspired to kill Coatlicue at Coatepec. Huitzilopochtli (god of the sun) leapt from his mother's womb fully armed for battle, his face painted and his left leg adorned with feathers.

He defeated the siblings and decapitated Coyolxauhqui: her body fell into pieces at the foot of the mountain.

Migrating from Aztlan

According to their mythology, it was Huitzilopochtli who sent an omen to the original Mexica/Aztecs, demanding that they leave their homeland at Aztlan, and settle in the basin of Mexico. While on that journey they stopped at Cerro Coatepec. According to different codices and to historian Bernardino de Sahagun, the Aztecs stayed at Coatepec for almost 30 years, building a temple on top of the hill in honor of Huitzilopochtli.

In his *Primeros Memoriales*, Bernardino de Sahagun records that a group of the migrating Mexica wanted to split from the rest of the tribes and settle at Coatepec. That angered Huitzilopochtli who descended from his temple and forced the Mexica to resume their journey.

A Replica of Cerro Coatepec

Once they reached the Valley of Mexico and founded their capital Tenochtitlan, the Mexica wanted to create a replica of the sacred mountain at the heart of their city. As many Aztec scholars have demonstrated, the Templo Mayor (Great Temple) of Tenochtitlan, in fact, represents a replica of Coatepec. Archaeological evidence of this correspondence was found in 1978, when a large stone sculpture of the decapitated and dismembered Coyolxauhqui was discovered at the base of the Huitzilopochtli side of the temple during some underground utility work in the heart of Mexico City.

This sculpture schows Coyolxauhqui with her arms and legs separated from her torso and decorated with snakes, skulls and earth monster imagery; the location of the sculpture at the base of the temple is also meaningful. Excavation of the sculpture by archaeologist Eduardo Matos Moctezuma revealed that the monumental sculpture (a disk measuring 3.25 meters or 10.5 feet wide) was in fact part of the temple platform which led up to the shrine of Huitzilopochtli.

Coatepec and Mesoamerican Mythology

Recent studies have demonstrated how the idea of a sacred Snake Mountain was already in place in Mesoamerican mythology well before the arrival of the Aztecs in Central Mexico. Possible precursors to the snake mountain myth have been identified at the main temples such as the one at the Olmec site of La Venta and at early Maya sites such as Cerros and Uaxactun. The Temple of the Feathered Serpent at Teotihuacan, dedicated to the god Quetzalcoatl, has also been proposed as antecedent to the Aztec mountain of Coatepec.

The real location of Coatepec is unknown, although there is a town called that in the basin of Mexico and another in Veracruz. Since the site is part of Aztec mythology/history, that isn't really too surprising. We don't know where the homeland of Aztlan is either. However, archaeologist Eduardo Yamil Gelo has made a strong argument for Hualtepec Hill, a site located northwest of Tula in Hidalgo state.

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Updated by K. Kris Hirst

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Bacon with nipple still on is horrifying meat-eaters - secret behind it is worse

16:21, 11 Aug 2016 Updated 18:13, 11 Aug 2016 By Nicola Oakley

mirror.co.uk

All meat-eaters are well aware that animals are killed to provide us with protein in our diet and satisfy our cravings for cheeseburgers and bacon sandwiches.

But when you're tucking into a sausage roll or some dinosaur-shaped turkey treats, they seem somewhat detached from their previous living form, wandering around a farmyard.

Not anymore.

A photograph of a piece of bacon with a nipple still attached (yep, an actual pig nipple) is going viral - because it's making everyone feel sick.

Kind of hard to ignore you're eating a once-living creature when its nipple is in your face, isn't it?



Reddit/misssmeg

That's it. We're becoming vegetarians.

One person described the image was "horrifying" while another admitted "I think I'm done eating bacon forever. Can't unsee."

Reddit user goatcoat commented: "It's a bit like eating something that still has eyes."

But that's where it got even worse.

Liontta made a shock confession which will surely put any meat-lover off their bacon: "I almost feel bad admitting this, and I might even get down voted, but whatever.

"But when I worked in a high end retail, the butchers used to intentionally give the nipple bacon out to rude/abusive customers. Usually as a free sample. I personally found it pretty hilarious.

"For anybody who might get upset about this, let me state for the record that it is not dangerous to eat the nipple, it's entirely edible. It just serves as an unpleasant reminder of where food actually comes from, but is otherwise harmless."

One Reddit who spent two years working for a free-range pork producer offered some insight into the matter. commenting: "It will be from a castrated male. The girls are saved for breeding, as are the castrrated males, though the females can be used as ground after their mothering years are complete."

It prompted a discussion on meat-eating in general and one person praised it for reminding them they're eating an animal.

NotSoSlenderMan commented: "I almost became a vegetarian because the ham at Thanksgiving dinner had a vein in it and I was kind of eating around it when my disgusting aunt eating like a disgusting person was gnawing on a piece like a wild animal and exclaimed: 'Oh look at this beautiful vein on this ham!"

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Burkina Faso bans donkey skin exports, affecting Asian trade - BBC News

bbc.com





Donkeys are used mostly for transport purposes in Burkina Faso

Image copyright

Burkina Faso has banned the export of donkey skins as a sharp increase in sales to Asia is threatening the animal's population.

Donkeys have been "over-exploited" and their numbers needed to be kept at a sustainable level, the

government said.

China is a big importer of donkey skins from Burkina Faso, using them to make traditional medicines.

In Burkina Faso, donkeys are commonly used to transport goods, though some communities eat their meat.

The surge in exports has put pressure on the local market, with the price of donkeys rising, says BBC Afrique's Abdourahmane Dia.

The price of the animal's hide has risen from about \$4 (£3) a few years ago to \$50, he adds.

Why

China can't get enough donkeys: By Fuchsia Dunlop, BBC News

Gelatin made from donkey skin is highly prized in China as a medicinal tonic, thought to nourish the blood, boost the immune system and act as a general pick-me-up.

It is sometimes referred to as one of the "three nourishing treasures" (zi bu san bao), along with ginseng and the antlers of young deer.

The most famous donkey gelatin is produced in Dong'e County in north-eastern Shandong Province, where it is traditionally made with the local well-water.

Donkey gelatin is sometimes mixed with walnuts, goji berries and other tonic foods and sold in dark, gummy slabs that can be eaten as a snack.

Health and longevity is a Chinese national obsession, and tonic foods like this are often lavishly packaged and presented as expensive gifts.

Aside from gelatin, donkey meat is a delicacy in some Chinese regions, especially in the north of the country.

Here, the lean meat is often simmered in a richly-spiced broth, and then cooled, sliced and served with a refreshing dip of chopped garlic and vinegar.

The meat has a fine, dense texture and a marvellous flavour that's a little reminiscent of beef.

In northern Hebei province, one famous snack is the lu rou huo shao, in which chopped, spiced donkey meat is mixed with fresh green chilli and stuffed into a layered pastry - its name is sometimes translated into English as a "donkey burger".

Donkey meat may also be made into soups and stews.

As the Chinese middle classes have grown richer, demand for donkey gelatin and other tonic delicacies has soared - in January the New York Times reported that a shortage of donkey gelatin had encouraged a boom in imitation products.

The ban also covers the hide of horses and camels, Burkina Faso's director for public veterinary health Adama Maiga told the AFP news agency.

The government would also be "regulating" the slaughter of the animals, he added.

Last month, an abattoir set up by French and Chinese businessmen in a village on the outskirts of the capital, Ouagadougou, was ransacked by residents protesting against the stench coming out of it and the air, water and land pollution it was causing, AFP reports.

Burkina Faso, a poor West African state, has about 1.4 million donkeys.

Exports of the skin rose from 1,000 in the first quarter of 2015 to more than 18,000 in the last quarter, the Burkinabe authorities say.

Nearly 65,000 skins were exported in the first six months of this year, mostly to China.

Its donkey population has been dwindling because of low fertility rates and the long rearing period, causing a a shortage of hides used to produce a traditional medicine known as "ejiao", according to a report in January in the China Daily newspaper.

The medicine is taken mostly by women who suffer from anaemia, dry coughs or dizziness.

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https://hauntedspotslibrary.wordpress.com/2013/01/25/weekly-haunted-spot-2-the-barghest-whitby-england/

Posted on January 25, 2013 by Anthony Justus



Black Shuck

The side streets of Whitby (called Snickleways in the city of York, term that means side street or alleyway that has since been adopted into official use) are narrow and confining yet many say that one does not walk them alone and pity be the one who discovers what walks with you in the dark on the misty nights on this small sea side English town.

The streets of Whitby, York and the surrounding moors are haunted by the terrifying specter that takes a lupine form, huge and black, with gleaming red or green eyes that howls a deathly dirge and woe be to those that hear it because they are next to die. What is this monstrous apparition called? The barghest.

The barghest is considered by those who collect folklore to be a "black dog" type of spirit. Black dogs are a type of ghost or spirit entity that is typically associated with death, the demonic forces and hell itself. Rarely are they good omens, the Gurt Dog in Somerset and the Black Dog of Hanging Hills in Connecticut being rare exceptions. They come in many forms, from headless men in black, to black rabbits and human spirits that burst into flame. The most common of course, give the entity its name sake, that of a monstrous hound with flaming red or green eyes, huge fangs and claws, that grow in size to monstrous to diminutive, that can walk without making a sound, runs faster than any human prey could ever hope to and that walls and doors do not keep out.

Whitby, while infamous for the sightings and screams of the barghest, is by no means the only place such a monster has been seen. Troller's Gill is a limestone gorge not far from Appletreewick in the Yorkshire Dales. It is reported the home of the Barghest. During the 1960s, it served as a fluorspar and later a lead mine.

The barghest and other such black dog ghosts are often associated and seen in conjuction with violent electrical storms, cross roads, places of execution and ancient pathways. While the origin of the ghostly black dogs are hard to pin down, it certainly has ties to both the Celtic and Germanic elements in British folklore. Their association with death may be from the scavenging habits of dogs. Below are more examples from the Yorkshire area and around England where the barghest is seen in all its many forms and meanings:

Black Dogs have been reported from almost all the counties of England, the exceptions being Middlesex and Rutland.

• On Dartmoor, the notorious squire Cabell was said to have been a huntsman who sold his soul to the Devil. When he died in 1677, black hounds are said to have appeared around his burial chamber. The ghostly huntsman is said to ride with black dogs; this tale inspired Arthur Conan Doyle to write his well-known story *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. The Devon Wishthounds ('Wisht' is a dialect word for "Ghostly/Haunted") are a related traditional

folklore phenomenon apparently related either to the Germanic dogs of the *Wild Hunt* or the Brythonic Cwn Annwn.

- In Lancashire, the black hound is called Barguist, Gytrash, Padfoot, The Grim, Shag, Trash, Striker or Skriker.
- In Tring, Hertfordshire, a fierce-looking black hound with red eyes is said to haunt the middle of the road in the area where the gibbet once stood. Locally it is known as Lean Dog, and is the spirit of a chimney sweep executed for murder. When approached, the lean dog sinks into the ground.
- The Gurt Dog ("Great Dog") of Somerset is an example of a benevolent dog. It was said that mothers would allow their children to play unsupervised on the Quantock Hills because they believed that the Gurt Dog would protect them. It would also accompany lone travellers in the area, acting as a protector and guide.
- Stories are told of a black dog in Twyford, near Winchester.
- In Wakefield, Leeds, Pudsey, and some areas of Bradford the local version of the legend is known as "Padfoot". Bear in mind that Padfoot also refers to the legend of a executed mule as well.
- There are many tales of ghostly black dogs in Lincolnshire collected by Ethel Rudkin for her 1938 publication *Folklore*. Such a creature, known locally as "Hairy Jack", is said to haunt the fields and village lanes around Hemswell, and there have been reported sightings throughout the county, from Brigg to Spalding. Rudkin, who claimed to have seen Hairy Jack herself, formed the impression that black dogs in Lincolnshire were mainly of a gentle nature, and looked upon as a spiritual protector.
- A black dog has been said to haunt the Newgate Prison for over 400 years, appearing before executions. According to legend, in 1596, a scholar was sent to the prison for witchcraft, but was killed and eaten by starving prisoners before he was given a trial. The dog was said to appear soon after, and although the terrified men killed their guards and escaped, the beast is said to have haunted them wherever they fled.
- Galley Hill in Luton, Bedfordshire, is said to have been haunted by a black dog ever since a storm set the gibbet alight sometime in the 18th century.
- BetchworthCastle in Surrey is said to be haunted by a black dog that prowls the ruins at night.
- In Norfolk, Suffolk and the northern parts of Essex a black dog, known as Black Shuck or Shug is regarded as malevolent, with stories ranging from terrifying victims to being a portent of illness or death to themselves or a person close to the victim. There are tales that in 1577 it attacked the church in the village of Bungay, killing two people before running to the church in the nearby village of Blythburgh, leaving claw marks which remain today. There are also less common tales of a similar dog said to accompany people on their way home in the role of protector rather than a portent of ill omen. But in mid Essex Black Shuck is most commonly regarded as a bringer of death.
- Black Dog Hill, and Black Dog Halt railway station in Wiltshire are named after a dog which is said to be found in the area.

The best advice if you are alone on the misty moors of England and see such a black hound approaching you?

Pray.

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Paranormal investigator, writer, seeker of knowledge and truth in all its forms, dark and light. Nothing is what it seems; there is nothing so strange as truth and truth is elusive as the shadow cast in the deepest night.

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© Bang Showbiz Barry Gibb

Barry Gibb has seen his brothers' ghosts.

The sole surviving member of the Bee Gees - whose youngest sibling Andy died in 1988 aged 30, while twin siblings Maurice and Robin passed away in 2003 and 2012 respectively - insists it wasn't "fun" having visions of his late family members because he didn't know if it was real or not.

Discussing his visions, he said: "Yes and it's not fun because you're not quite sure what it was about. If it was real. I've seen two brothers.

"I saw Robin and my wife saw Andy.

"The biggest [question] of all, is there life after death? I'd like to

know."

Barry - who has five children with wife Linda - also believes he has been reincarnated a number of times.

Asked if he feels he's been here before, he told Event magazine: "Perhaps. I've had a few incarnations. I try not to question it. There's been so much loss in my family, for me it's a standing mystery.

[Will I see my brothers again?] I don't want to question it. Don't want to go there."

The 'Jive Talkin" hitmaker admitted watching TV shows like 'Downton Abbey' helped him through his grief after Robin lost his long battle with cancer.

He said: "You are in a kind of tunnel. You have to come out the other side and I waited for that and I watched television. 'Downton Abbey' - that got me through it, and 'Ray Donovan' and 'Billionaire'. I love them more than movies. I love the cliff-hangers. We get British television in America because I have Apple TV."

And Barry thought his career was over and he'd "fade away" once the last of his siblings passed away.

He said: "After Rob died I just sat moping around thinking that was the end of it and I would just fade away. I thought I was quite happy about fading away, but then the President of Columbia Records, Rob Stringer, came to see me and signed me and said, 'We're gonna move your ass!' And I thought, 'Oh well, that's OK.' So I'm back."

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ZING! THUD! Fleeing Suspect Flings Batarang Into Seattle Police Car

nbcnews.com

Jul 27 2016, 7:09 pm ET

by Alex Johnson

A 23-year-old man was being held on felony assault charges after he threatened a bouncer with a homemade spear and then slung a Batarang into the car of the cops who were chasing him, Seattle police said Wednesday.

You read that right: a Batarang. As in, one of Batman's boomerangs.



IMAGE: Batarang

A Batarang thrown by a fleeing suspect embedded itself into the front end of a pursuing Seattle police SUV on Monday. Seattle Police Department

The suspect, who wasn't identified but who clearly appeared to have a thing for superheroes, first swung his improvised spear — a knife attached to a metal pole — at a bouncer Monday night at a bar on Capitol Hill, north of downtown, police said.

Police responded and started chasing the man — who produced a "sharp, black Batman-style throwing star" and flung it at the cop car.

advertisement

His aim was true: The Batarang flew into the SUV's lower front end.

Police said they were requesting further charges of weapons violations and obstruction of justice against the man, who they reassured residents is "not Batman."



The 6-inch-long Batarang embedded itself into the front end of a pursuing Seattle police SUV on Monday. Seattle Police Department

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Man accused of using prosthetic arm as weapon during road rage attack

2016/07/12 kmov.com



Posted: Jul 12, 2016 7:20 PM PDT Updated: Jul 13, 2016 6:45 AM PDT By Cory Stark, Reporter By Ashlee Carlstrom



Joshua Stockinger facing 4 felony charges stemming from seriously injuring couple in July with prosthetic arm (Credit: Jefferson County Sheriff Department)

Joshua Stockinger facing 4 felony charges stemming from seriously injuring couple in July with prosthetic arm (Credit: Jefferson County Sheriff Department)

JEFFERSON COUNTY, Mo. (KMOV.com) – Police say a man who allegedly beat a police officer with his prosthetic arm in May is back at it again, this time hitting a woman with his arm during a road rage incident.

Jefferson County authorities say Joshua Stockinger was involved in a road rage incident during the second week of July. Stockinger allegedly used his prosthetic arm as a weapon to seriously injure a husband and wife. The husband, 52, has two broken legs and his wife, 53, has cuts to her head, police say.

In May, Stockinger was seen on surveillance video from Jim Butler Chevrolet in Fenton getting into a fight with a St. Louis County police officer. In that incident, he is accused of hitting the officer several times over the head with his prosthetic arm.

After the incident, Stockinger's prosthetic arm was taken by police for evidence. Stockinger received his prosthetic arm back.

Stockinger is facing four felony charges stemming from the latest violent assault in July. He is being held in the Jefferson County Jail on a \$150,000 cash-only bond.

KMOV.com

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The Bells of Forrabury

http://cornishfolkloretales.blogspot.co.uk/2014/09/the-bells-of-forrabury.html



Sunday, 28 September 2014



TO this day the tower of Forrabury Church, or, as it is called by Mr Hawker, "the silent tower of Bottreaux," remains without bells. "At Forrabury the chimes have never sounded for a marriage, the knell has never been heard for a funeral." --Collins.

In days long ago, the inhabitants of the parish of Forrabury--which does not cover a square mile, but which now includes the chief part of the town of Boscastle and its

harbour--resolved to have, a peal of bells which should rival those of the neighbouring church of Tintagel, which are said to have rung merrily at the marriage, and tolled solemnly at the death, of Arthur.

The bells were cast; the bells were blessed; and the bells were shipped for Forrabury. Few voyages were more favourable; and the ship glided, with a fair wind, along the northern shores of Cornwall, waiting for the tide to carry her safely into the harbour of Bottreaux.

The vesper bells rang out at Tintagel; and the pilot, when he heard the blessed sound, devoutly crossed himself, and bending his knee, thanked God for the safe and quick voyage which they had made.

The captain laughed at the superstition of the pilot, as he called it, and swore that they had only to thank themselves for the speedy voyage, and that, with his arm at the helm, and his judgment to guide them, they should soon have a happy landing. The pilot checked this profane speech; but the wicked captain--and he swore more impiously than ever that all was due to himself and his men--laughed to scorn the pilot's prayer. "May God forgive you!" was the pilot's reply.

Those who are familiar with the northern shores of Cornwall will know that sometimes a huge wave, generated by some mysterious power in the wide Atlantic, will roll on, overpowering everything by its weight and force.

'While yet the captain's oaths were heard, and while the inhabitants on the shore were looking out from the cliffs, expecting, within an hour, to see the vessel, charged with their bells, safe in their harbour, one of these vast swellings of the ocean was seen. Onward came the grand billow in all the terror of its might. The ship rose not upon the waters as it came onward. She was overwhelmed, and sank in an instant close to the land.

As the vessel sank, the bells were heard tolling with a muffled sound, as if ringing the death-knell of the ship and sailors, of whom the good pilot alone escaped with life.

When storms are coming, and only then, the bells of Forrabury, with their dull, muffled sound, are heard from beneath the heaving sea, a warning to the wicked; and the tower has remained to this day silent.

From Popular Romances of the West of England by Robert Hunt

'The Silent Tower of Bottreaux.'

The pilot heard his native bells hang on the breeze in fitful swells. 'Thank God' with reverent brow he cried, 'We make the shore on evening's tide.' 'Come to thy God in time.' It was his marriage chime. Youth, manhood, old age past,

his bells must ring at last.

'Thank God, thou whining knave, on land but thank at sea the steersman's hand', the captain's voice above the gale, 'Thank the good ship and ready sail.' 'Come to thy God in time.' Sad grew the boding chime. 'Come to thy God at last.'

Boomed on the heavy blast.

Up rose the sea as if it heard the Mighty Master's signal word. What thrills the captain's whitening lip? The death groans of his sinking ship. 'Come to thy God in time.' Swung deep the funeral chime. Grace, mercy, kindness past, 'Come to thy God at last.'

Long did the rescued pilot tell, when greying hairs o'er his forehead fell, while those around would hear and weep, that fearful judgement of the deep. 'Come to thy God in time.' Swung the deep funeral chime, he read his native chime, youth, manhood, old age past,

his bell rung out at last.

Still when the storm of Bottreau's waves is wakening in his weedy caves, those bells that sudden surges hide peal their deep notes beneath the tide. 'Come to thy God in time.' Thus saith the ocean's chime. 'Storm, billow, whirlwind past, come to thy God at last.

Revd R S Hawker

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Berlin's graveyards are being converted for use by the living

pri.org

August 08, 2016 · 1:00 PM EDT

By Daniel Estrin



Children climb near a gravestone in the Sophienkirche daycare playground in Berlin. The daycare is located on the grounds of the Sophienkirche church, and it's playground occupies a space that was once the parish's graveyard. Credit:

Shane Thomas McMillan

Graveyards are disappearing in the German capital.

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Listen to the Story.

They are being converted into public parks, playgrounds, and even land for new housing. To some, it might sound macabre, but in Germany, it reflects unique attitudes about death.

At one kindergarten playground in central Berlin, for instance, kids chase each other on bikes, run

around with balloons, and climb on top of tombstones. The playground is built on an old graveyard belonging to the Sophien Church.

"This hasn't been used as a cemetery for much more than 100 years," pastor Christine Schlund explained.

A few steps away from an unmarked tombstone in the middle of a sandbox, another grave is fenced off: the final resting place of the esteemed historian Leopold von Ranke, considered the father of modern historical scholarship.

One can only wonder what this esteemed historian might think about his place in contemporary history — next to a sandbox.

"People tend to be angry — surprised and angry — at having this grave in the middle of the kindergarten," said Schlund. She said there are those "who think it is strange children are playing on the former graveyard."

Her opinion?

"I think it's absolutely no problem," she said, noting that the space hadn't been used for new burials in many decades.

"Christian faith is about life," she said. "I think by having children playing on the cemetery, the dead are honored in a special way."

Burials have gone out of fashion in Berlin.

A few hundred years ago, as space started getting tight, cemeteries started charging rental fees. Many people are now choosing cremation instead.

Some pay to be buried in a forest cemetery outside Berlin. The urn is buried at the foot of a tree, and a small plaque with the name of the deceased is nailed to the trunk.

Jurgen Quandt, the soft-spoken head of a Protestant association that oversees many of Berlin's cemeteries, predicts only a quarter of the land in his cemeteries will be used for burials in upcoming decades.

"We have to reflect what will we do with all these cemeteries, which are not longer needed for burials," he said.

Graveyard recycling is not a new practice in Berlin. The kindergarten playground was built atop the cemetery in the 1950s, and in the 1970s, a Christian cemetery in the city was converted into a Muslim cemetery to accommodate an influx of Turks.

But as the city expands, cemeteries have become prime real estate. For Quandt's cemetery association, it's a money issue: The association can't afford to maintain cemeteries when fewer people are paying for plots.

"We have no other choice," he said.

One of the association's cemeteries is being converted into a park. Another has been partially converted into a cemetery for lesbians. Two graveyards have been appropriated for new housing for refugees and migrants — some of the million-plus people who fled the Middle East and moved to Germany in the last few years.

Then there's the Berlin graveyard, mostly cleared of headstones, that is now a community garden, including a small Syrian refugee garden with tomatoes, onions and mint.

The old tombstone carver's workshop at the entrance to the graveyard now hosts German language classes for refugees.

"It's a space that's been abandoned, and used for burying people, used for, now, gardening and cultivating human beings in the best way possible," said Fetewei Tarekegn, the head gardener of the community project.

He said the project sends a message to refugee gardeners: "To show them, you know, you're refugees but you are not second-class citizens. You're not a nobody."

On the edge of the Syrian community garden, one lone tombstone remains, engraved with the name of Marta Krauss, who died in 1933. Underneath her name, a motto in German reads: "unforgettable."

Ironic? Yes. But it's inevitable, the gardener believes.

On the other hand, Quandt of the cemetery association says it is painful to watch a cemetery vanish.

"I think it's a very, very important place for people to be confronted with death. To know that we have to die, that we can't live forever," said Quandt. "If you have no cemeteries in the future, we lose a very important place."

There is one exception to the disappearing cemeteries of Berlin. No one touches the stately graves of famous historical figures, like Leopold von Ronke's grave in the playground.

Not a famous historical figure yourself? No problem.

For a couple thousand euros, the cemetery association will bury you in the grave of a famous historical figure of your choice, from a catalogue of options.

You'll share a grave with a person so important, chances are you, too, will be able to rest in peace.

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Better Than Blood? popsci.com

A man-made, pure-white compound called Oxycyte carries oxygen 50 times as effectively as our own blood. Researchers are betting that it's the best way to treat America's leading cause of accidental death: traumatic brain injury

By Nicole Davis November 1, 2006



John B. Carnett by John B. Carnett

Grace LeClair had just finished eating dinner with friends when she got the phone call every parent dreads. The chaplain at the Medical College of Virginia was on the other end. "Your daughter has been in a serious accident. You should come to Richmond right away." LeClair was in Virginia Beach at the time, a two-hour drive from 20-year-old Bess-Lyn, who was now lying in a coma in a Richmond hospital bed.

The friend who was with Bess-Lyn has since filled in the details of that day in

March. The two women were bicycling down a steep hill, headed toward a busy intersection, when Bess-Lyn yelled that her brakes weren't working and she couldn't slow down. Her friend screamed for her to turn into an alley just before the intersection. But Bess-Lyn didn't turn sharply enough and crashed, headfirst, into a concrete wall. She wasn't wearing a helmet. By the time the ambulance reached the hospital, Bess-Lyn was officially counted among the 1.5 million Americans who will suffer a traumatic brain injury (TBI) this year.

Bess-Lyn's mom was halfway to Richmond when she received a second call, this time from a doctor. "He was telling me that she had a very serious injury, that she had to have surgery to save her life and that if I would give permission, they would use this experimental, not-approved-by-the-FDA drug," Grace LeClair recalls. "He said that it would increase the oxygen supply to her brain. To me that only made sense, so I said yes."

With her mother's verbal consent, Bess-Lyn was treated with a type of artificial blood called Oxycyte, the subject of a clinical trial led by doctors at the teaching hospital of Virginia Commonwealth University. In animal tests, the compound has been proven to cut the effects of brain damage nearly in half, presumably because its tiny particles can ferry oxygen through swollen, injured vessels our own red blood cells can't squeeze through. (The suffocation of brain cells is a major contributor to brain damage.) The doctors' next step is to get the same result in accident victims like Bess-Lyn, who became the third of eight patients to be enrolled in the hospital's pilot Phase II clinical trial, designed to test the drug's safety and efficacy. If Oxycyte performs well in subsequent trials, it will become the first drug the FDA approves to treat traumatic brain injury in the U.S. and in hot spots like Iraq, where TBI has become horrifyingly common.

THE RED AND THE WHITE

Oxycyte is the newest product in a family of compounds known as artificial blood. The search for a

synthetic substitute for human blood began at least as early as the 19th century, when doctors actually tried using milk to replenish blood loss. With the onset of the AIDS crisis in the early 1980s, pharmaceutical companies took on the cause in force, competing to create an artificial substance that could eliminate the problems—including tainted blood and supply shortages—associated with donated blood. The idea was that these substitutes could replace the use of donated blood in transfusions, during surgery, and in patients who had experienced major blood loss through injury.

Two categories of contenders soon emerged. The first was a red-colored substitute made in part from human or animal hemoglobin, the protein in our red blood cells that carries oxygen. The second was a snow-white, completely synthetic substance made from perfluorocarbons, or PFCs, a compound whose chemical makeup closely resembles the nonstick Teflon in your frying pan. PFCs have the highest gas-dissolving capacity of any liquid and, when used with supplemental oxygen, allow blood to carry many times more oxygen than it normally does (and to carry more oxygen faster and more easily than hemoglobin-based substitutes).

In large-scale clinical trials in the 1980s and 1990s in which researchers pitted the fake bloods against the real thing, patients who received the artificial stuff experienced a disproportionate number of heart attacks and strokes. Those outcomes—widely attributed to a combination of poorly designed trials and first-generation formulations—effectively shut down human studies and, in some cases, bankrupted biotech firms.

After two decades and a billion dollars' worth of research, the most valuable lesson learned was that real blood and these artificial bloods were apples and oranges: The life-giving liquid in our veins acts like a supply line for everything from nutrients to hormones to oxygen, even working double-time to regulate our blood pressure and fight infection. The manufactured substances, on the other hand, are one-trick ponies for oxygen delivery. But it's a trick they perform remarkably well-in the case of PFC-based substitutes, carrying oxygen at rates roughly 50 times that of our own blood.



John B. Carnett by John B. Carnett

Today, blood substitutes are often called "oxygen therapeutics" for this very reason, and manufacturers are no longer putting them up against real blood in clinical trials. In fact, sophisticated screening practices have made donated blood so safe that finding an alternative to diseased blood is no longer necessary. But there is still a significant need for a universal-type, oxygen-carrying fluid, particularly as a solution to ever-more-common shortages of donated blood and as a fool-proof substitute for the military, which poured at least \$10 million into developing a blood

proxy before giving up and waiting for pharmaceutical companies to solve the problem for them.

Doctors at VCU are betting that a successful pilot trial of Oxycyte will win the attention-and influence-of the armed forces, which would help usher the drug through the clinical-trial process and into the hands of doctors and medics in the near term. At least that's the hope—or rather, the careful, calculated plan-of Bruce Spiess.

DR. BLOOD

Spiess's office, #007, is in the basement of a building not far from the ER where Bess-Lyn was rushed after her accident. Stuck among a bunch of animal laboratories along a cinder-block hallway, the office is far less prominent than you would expect for someone in charge of a major research center. Along with two other physicians, Spiess heads the Virginia Commonwealth University Reanimation Engineering Shock Center. Formed in 2000, the institute, which goes by the acronym VCURES, comprises some 50 scientists, engineers and doctors, all focused on developing treatments for traumatic injury. VCURES's research dovetails perfectly with the needs of the military; its current projects include an implanted sensor that could detect the severity of a soldier's wounds on a battlefield and a kitty-litter-like compound that could quickly stop bleeding from an open wound. Artificial blood, however, is perhaps VCURES's most ambitious project. And artificial blood's most dedicated advocate at VCURES is Bruce Spiess.

For years, the anesthesiologist has advanced ideas that seem downright heretical, ranging from his stance that traditional blood transfusions usually cause more harm than good, to his belief-reached before most in the industry—that blood substitutes should not actually be used in place of blood. "I realized very early on that going head to head with a unit of blood was going to be difficult," Spiess, 52, says from behind his cluttered desk. "Instead, why not take these compounds, understand how they deliver oxygen to tissues better than blood stored from a bank, and use that as a real advantage. Go find some diseased states to treat that, right now, we don't have a treatment for." He leans back in his chair and smiles, as if this last point is so obvious he can't believe he's still making it.

It was during Spiess's final year of anesthesiology training, in 1982, that his professor at the Mayo Clinic asked him to compile a summary of the three blood substitutes created up to that point. Two of them were made with PFCs, and Spiess found those two particularly intriguing. Developed in the 1940s during the Manhattan Project to stabilize highly reactive uranium isotopes, PFCs are completely inert oils. Like Teflon, almost nothing sticks to them, which is why they must be emulsified before they can be soluble in blood. "These chemists were working on trying to blow things up," Spiess says. It was just by luck that they eventually noticed that these liquid PFCs carried huge amounts of oxygen.



John B. Carnett by John B. Carnett

Now, more than 20 years after he first studied artificial blood, Spiess has worked with nearly every substitute ever made. "Bruce was one of the first and best academic people in this field," says Robert Winslow, the former head of the Army's now-defunct artificial-blood program. "He was one of the first people who said, 'This isn't just blood; that's way too simple. These solutions have to be thought of as therapeutic agents in and of themselves." In the past two decades, Spiess has been involved in overseeing more than a dozen human and animal

studies, both of hemoglobin-based and PFC-based blood substitutes. Manufacturers routinely approach him for advice and invite him to conduct research on their products-as did Synthetic Blood International, the maker of the PFC Oxycyte. In late 2005, Spiess teamed up with noted VCU neurosurgeon Ross Bullock to design the Phase II pilot trial (Bullock had earlier conducted

successful animal studies with the drug). The trial, Spiess says, is the first step in determining whether Oxycyte will ultimately be adopted to treat a wide array of injuries, including traumatic brain injury, which affects everyone from car-accident victims to pummeled boxers to bicyclists like Bess-Lyn. Aside from giving patients oxygen and anti-inflammatories and, in extreme cases, removing part of the skull to release the pressure of the swelling brain, there are few treatments for TBI-and no drug therapy. Which is precisely why Spiess has chosen to focus on it.

"The FDA is in some ways pressured, because one, there's not a good treatment for brain trauma," Spiess tells me, explaining his strategy for

getting the agency to pay attention to a drug he thinks will fill a critical void in emergency medicine. "Two, there's a major international event going on, and we're losing our soldiers because of brain trauma." Traumatic brain injury is now found in 30 percent of the injured veterans sent home to Walter Reed Army Medical Center from Iraq and Afghanistan-twice the percentage as in Vietnam. Often caused by the concussive force from insurgents' improvised explosive devices or from penetrating head wounds, TBI can wipe out a victim's memory, leave him blind, trigger epilepsy, or kill him outright. Many are calling it this war's signature wound. So it's no coincidence that the Army and Navy have expressed interest in the use of Oxycyte to deliver oxygen to the brain. Getting the military on board, Spiess says, improves the chance of getting the drug on a "fast track," the spedup FDA approval course that could put Oxycyte in Iraq by late next year.

"If we can get it through the FDA, then we can use it in so many different ways," Spiess says. To treat stroke, for instance, or heart attacks, sickle-cell anemia–even spinal-cord injuries."

SPINAL ZAP

Jason Highsmith leads me into a cold, fluorescent-lit room filled with half a dozen rat-size operating tables. Recently, Highsmith, a neurosurgeon who just finished his residency at VCU, inflicted spinal-cord injuries on sedated animals and then tried to increase oxygen flow to the impacted areas using Oxycyte. Studies have shown that preserving as little as 5 to 10 percent of the neurons in the spinal cord after an injury can mean the difference between being wheelchair-bound and walking with a cane. Keeping the oxygen flowing is vital to those neurons' survival.

"It's like a magnet for oxygen," says Highsmith, 33, who is 6'2" and bean-thin. He hands me a leftover glass vial of Oxycyte from the fridge, half-filled with the white fluid whose watery consistency reminds me of soymilk. It doesn't look like much, but when combined with supplemental oxygen, the amount of Oxycyte in a jar the size of an aspirin bottle can carry as much oxygen as the four liters of blood typically pumping through a person's body.

Highsmith offers me a seat beside his computer and pulls up a PowerPoint presentation. "I just shared this with the neurosurgery department last night," he says, still sounding keyed-up. To explain why Oxycyte is so beneficial during injuries, Highsmith clicks through to an image of a healthy human spinal cord. A forest of microcapillaries branches around it, each microcapillary three or four microns wide. To deliver oxygen, our doughnut-shaped red blood cells, which are naturally wider than those capillaries, must nonetheless squeeze through the tiny passageways to unload their oxygen. "There's not a lot of room for error," Highsmith says, "even under normal circumstances."

Once the spinal cord-or any organ-is injured, these incredibly narrow vessels constrict even further, a reaction some researchers believe must be the body's way of preventing blood loss. The defense mechanism's unfortunate side effect is that it starves the

damaged tissue of oxygen until the veins collapse and, in extreme cases, the tissue dies. Highsmith clicks to a picture of an injured human spinal cord, and it looks as if the once-thriving forest of veins has been clear-cut. He assumes that the rats that received PFCs in his study maintained a healthy grove of veins even after injury, since the oxygen levels in their spinal cords were six times as high as in the rodents that didn't get Oxycyte. "It's like a miracle drug," he says. "Like pouring oxygen over the tissues."

BUYING SYNTHETIC

A wonder drug, perhaps, but one with caveats. Most of those in the artificial-blood world, like Steven A. Gould, the CEO of Northfield Laboratories in Evanston, Illinois, have hedged their bets on the more common hemoglobin-based substitutes. Northfield's PolyHeme, for instance, has recently completed its last clinical trial; the company is now compiling its data for the FDA to review.

"The benefit of hemoglobin-based oxygen carriers is that oxygen is loaded onto them when we're breathing room air," Gould says. That is, hemoglobin-based substitutes work just like our own blood. To get the full effect from Oxycyte, on the other hand, a patient breathes in 50 to 100 percent oxygen four hours before receiving it and for 12 hours after it's infused (air contains 21 percent oxygen). "That's a logistical limitation," Gould says, "and in general, it's preferable not to breathe supplemental oxygen if it can be avoided."

Most of today's ambulances carry oxygen on board, as do military rescue helicopters, so the problem isn't getting a tank of air to the patient. It's the risk of inhaling supplemental oxygen for too long. Scientists know that pure oxygen increases the number of free radicals in our bloodstream, which can damage tissues and membranes, but the long-term severity of that damage is unknown. Spiess believes that Oxycyte could still work at even lower levels of oxygen, or even with room air, but he hasn't yet been able to test out either of those scenarios on humans.

And there are other, undeniable side effects. In past PFC studies, patients were found to experience a transient swelling of the liver as it absorbed the oily molecules of the PFC; some patients demonstrated a decrease in platelet count, which can hinder the blood's ability to clot; and some suffered short-term flu-like effects. Spiess has a quick response to concerns like these: "If you've been hit in the head or you've been shot or you're having a stroke, you don't sweat the flu-like symptoms." All drugs have some measure of toxicity, Spiess says. It's simply a case of the good outweighing the bad.

Although the sample size is far too small to be statistically definitive, it seems that VCURES's brainingury trial may be an example of just that. By August, the hospital had enrolled all of the eight patients it needed to complete the Phase II study. Even at the best trauma centers in the world, the mortality rate for TBI victims is one in three. Of the eight patients Spiess and Bullock treated with Oxycyte, only one died. The recovery process for the surviving patients has been unusually smooth.

Extraordinarily so, in Bess-Lyn's case. After regaining consciousness two weeks after the accident, she recovered movement in her paralyzed right side and was ultimately deemed well enough to leave rehab a week earlier than predicted. She is expected to make a full recovery. Meanwhile, Spiess and Bullock are busy designing a larger trial that will bring their oxygen therapy to emergency rooms across the country-perhaps as soon as next year.

Nicole Davis is a journalist based in Brooklyn.

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Beware of gangster babies: Calif. database slammed

CBS News August 15, 2016, 9:31 AM

cbsnews.com



A baby lights a candle during a demonstration at the entrance of San Quentin State Prison as people gather against the execution of death row inmate Stanley Tookie Williams in San Quentin, December 12, 2005. Williams, the founder of the South Central gang the Crips, was awaiting his execution on December 13 after Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger denied him clemency for a crime that has kept Williams in San Quentin Prison half

of his life. Anti-death penalty activists claimed that Williams, a Nobel Prize nominee, was wrongfully accused of the crime.

HECTOR MATA/AFP/Getty Images

In 2003, California began attempting to gather the name of every known gangster and gang affiliate in the state. The state credited with having a large part in the birth of the modern street gang movement was doing anything it could to turn the tide.

CalGang, as the database became known, was supposed to only be accessed by law enforcement agencies and used to add people to gang injunctions, support arguments for enhanced sentencing in court and even be used to disqualify families from living in public housing.

Problems quickly arose, however, especially when it came to the question of adding juveniles to the list. CBS Los Angeles reported that a law was passed in 2013 requiring parents or guardians to be notified when their children were added to CalGang.

A new audit (PDF) of the program, however, finds that the problems ran deeper than mere notification; it found that some in state law enforcement appeared to be worried about gangster babies.

The audit, conducted by State Auditor Elaine M. Howle, "found 42 individuals in CalGang whose birthdates indicated that they were less than one year old at the time their information was entered, 28 of whom were entered into the system in part because they admitted to being gang members."

While scientists generally agree most babies utter their first coherent words around 12 months old, this semi-independent state agency apparently felt otherwise.

The Voice of San Diego reports the audit was prompted by San Diego Assemblywoman Shirley Weber, who, along with her colleagues, was worried about privacy issues, transparency, and control.

"Probably people are pretty shocked about just how deep the problems are in the CalGang system in terms of lack of transparency, lack of consistency in terms of how the standards are used," Weber said.

The Los Angeles Times reports the database gets state funding but "is overseen by an executive board and advisory committee made up of local law enforcement officials with no statutory authority. Howle noted that model means there is almost no public transparency or scrutiny of its work."

"In 2015, nearly 15,000 gang members or affiliates were added to the system while a little over 33,000 were removed," The L.A. Times report continues. "The database is overwhelmingly male -some 93.1 percent -- and disproportionately minority -- 64.9 percent Latino and 20.5 percent black."

Other problems discovered in audit of the database included: adding of individuals without sufficient evidence; difficulty in purging individuals despite sufficient evidence; the illegal use of the database as an employment screening tool; and inadequate parental notification for juveniles entered into the database.

CBS News

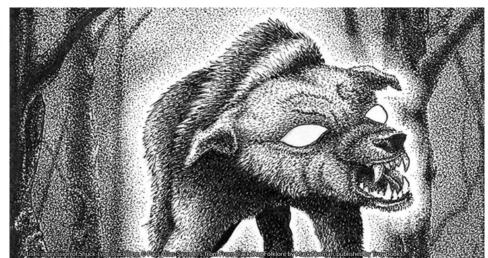
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Black Shuck: Proof of Existence Finally Found? - #FolkloreThursday

folklorethursday.com





Black Shuck: Proof of Existence Finally Found?

The other day my
Facebook feed
informed me that proof
of the Black Shuck, one
of the more ominous
variants of black dog
apparitions, had been
discovered. Which was
curious, because six

months ago it told me the same thing. And last year. And in 2014. And so did many of the allegedly sensible Facebook groups that I participate in.

May 2014 was the month in which physical evidence of this creature's existence was finally proven when the skeleton of the legendary Black Shuck was reported upon in the United Kingdom.

At least, it was if you chose to read the correct news reports. In this article I would like to unpick the bones of this story (pun sadly intended) in order to demonstrate both how the facts never get in the way of a good story and also how folklore transmission is still alive and well in the world's press.

During an archaeological dig at Leiston Abbey in Suffolk in 2013, the skeletal remains of a very large dog were found amongst the ruins. The bones, which were said to belong to a male dog, suggested that the animal stood at around seven feet in height, with an estimated weight of 200 pounds.

Initially reported in the local press, the story was of sufficient interest to be picked up by the *Daily Mail*, a national tabloid newspaper, and from there inevitably onto the internet news sites. At each step the story became more embellished, and more riddled with factual and folkloric inaccuracies, before *Yahoo News* triumphantly decreed on its website:

"Bones of 7ft Hound from Hell Black Shuck 'Discovered in Suffolk Countryside"

The story is of great interest as a piece of folklore in itself and warrants some deconstruction as a fine demonstration of the way that stories are told, retold and disseminated in the modern age, helping to keep the folklore alive. The local Leiston newspaper presented a fairly short piece which was greatly expanded and illustrated with some fine (over the top and inaccurate) graphical representations of the Shuck by the *Mail*.

The grave in which the bones were found by an archaeology team from 'Dig Ventures' was approximately twenty inches deep and had no obvious markings attached to it. Pottery fragments found at the same dig level were dated to the 16th century. It was therefore decided that this was the "height of the Shuck's alleged reign" and hence a link to the story could be made.

Of course, it is undoubtedly the case that the skeleton belonged to a large dog, possibly a Newfoundland, which would have been kept at the abbey at the time, as the sensible reportage of the Leiston newspaper happily pointed out. They quoted from an interview with Lisa Westcott Wilkins, the managing director of the archaeology group, who highlighted that the remains were found close to where the abbey kitchen would have been and pointed out that even in medieval times pets were held in high regard.

In point of fact, the only reference to Black Shuck at all in this original article was the headline, which asked in a rather tongue-in-cheek manner: "Are these the bones of devil dog, Black Shuck?". The rest of the piece concentrated on the archaeology, as the dig was an unusual example of a project which had been crowdfunded. But there is little appeal in that for a national newspaper, who could however get their teeth into the suggestion in the leader for the piece.



Artist's impression of Shuck-type Black Dog © Paul Atlas-Saunders, from Black Dog Folklore by Mark Norman, published by Troy Books.

The *Daily Mail* therefore ran with the Shuck link and removed the majority of the archaeological elements of the story altogether, apart from the obvious part of the bones having been discovered by archaeologists. Instead they chose to pad their article (which ran to 11 pages once printed from their online version with illustrations) with extensive mentions of the famous Bungay Black Dog case.

By the time the story was re-edited and published on the internet by Yahoo, there was no doubt that the bones of the Shuck had been found. Their article began:

"The bones of a seven-foot-long hound from hell have been discovered in the grounds of an ancient abbey in the Suffolk countryside.

Black Shuck was believed to have roamed the countryside about 500 years ago. Folk-law (sic) says the giant creature was the hound of hell, with savage claws and burning eyes.

According to the Daily Mail, the beast's remains have now been found by archaeologists digging at the site of an ancient abbey, located a few miles from where Black Shuck was said to have killed worshippers in 1577."

So there you have it. Get your news from the internet and you have definite proof that a legendary creature has been discovered. Look at the 'facts' that are now stated compared to the original article. It is now a hell hound.

This article is a bit of fun in a world which is all too often supplying us with nothing but bad news. It is a useful example of folklore in action and it serves a valuable purpose in helping to keep the traditions alive, in the same way that paranormal television programmes made "for entertainment purposes only" help to foster a continuing interest in areas to keep rich traditions going in the modern world.

The Black Shuck discovery continues to draw on a motif which has been with us for a long time, and which still affects a number of people in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, even if they are

unaware of the legends. Sometimes they can be completely unaware because of their age. For example, Nikki Hatch sent me this story from her childhood:

"I grew up in Liphook. Just under the iron bridge and turn left. Wheatsheaf Enclosure – the road leading to the golf course and further on to the coachroad. My mother was in the habit of walking the dogs in the early evening around dusk. It was one such evening and I was in a pushchair so I guess I would have been About 2 or 3 years old (1965/6). The poodles apparently stopped at the crossroads (where the main road intercepts (sic) the coachroad), staring towards the right turn and growled. I remember seeing a large black dog. It's mouth was very red. It's coat was rough and coarse. It just stood looking down at me. I apparently said to my mother 'Mummy, I don't like that black dog'. She could see nothing. I remember it felt threatening although, to my recollection it did nothing.

My mother tells me that she saw a black dog herself only a short distance along the same path. It was standing on the path looking towards her. She bent to pick up the poodles and it was gone although she couldn't see where it could have jumped without her noticing."

Nikki says that it was many years before she realised that black dog sightings were so common. At the age that she estimates she was when this sighting happened there was obviously no way that she could have known about, or consciously drawn upon any folk motif surrounding the black dog. So what did she see? Was it a real dog, and if so why did her mother not see it as well? Too many years have passed for us to ever know for certain.

There is an interesting afterword to this, to bring it into the 21st century. Researching the location a little more prior to publishing this story did not turn up any reported sightings of other 'ghostly' black dogs for certain. But it did provide a link to the Liphook community website, which yielded a page concerning dogs in the same general area. A person posting on the 'Local Talkback' page (a forum for local residents to air their views) discussed an incident where two black labradors were running loose in the road, causing cars to slow down. The writer and a colleague had endeavoured, and failed, to catch the dogs which ran off across a field. Two further people commented on the post, one to say that they had been involved in a serious car accident taking evasive action to avoid loose dogs there, and another to say that they had often seen a single black dog on that stretch of road.

Whilst we should not entertain the possibility too strongly that there is any sort of 'otherworldliness' about the dogs being commented upon on this website, the link to Nikki's story – in the same manner as the Black Shuck's bones – is the stuff of which folklore can be made in the right (or wrong) hands.

Mark's new book, *Black Dog Folklore* is available now from Troy Books: A comprehensive study of the image of the Black Dog in folklore, with an extensive gazetteer of over 700 UK sightings and traditions

East Anglian Daily Times, Tom Potter, May 2014 at http://www.eadt.co.uk/news/leiston_are_these_the_bones_of_devil_dog_black_shuck_1_3600768

Daily Mail, Paul Harris, May 2014 at http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2629353/ls-skeleton-legendary-devil-dog-Black-Shuck-terrorised-16th-century-East-Anglia.html



Yahoo News, Hannah Osborne, May 2014 at https://uk.news.yahoo.com/bones-7ft-hound-hell-black-shuck-discovered-suffolk-123530440.html

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'Blood moon' caught on film - is a 'rogue planet' going to hit Earth next month?

metro.co.uk

Rob Waugh for Metro.co.ukWednesday 24 Aug 2016 8:28 am



'Blood moon' captured on film - is a mysterious planet going to hit Earth and kill us all

It's been a busy year for Doomsday fans – first, the world was going to end at the end of July.

Now, a chill has swept over the internet once again – as a weird red moon was seen in the sky over Pennsylvania.

It's Nibiru, conspiracy fans think – an unseen planet beyond Neptune which is already swooping towards us, ready to kill us call.

This one's a classic, though – it's basically two conspiracy theories for the price of

one, with a sprinkling of the Blood Moon Prophecy thrown in.

The Blood moon prophecy was hyped as a sign of the end of the world after Pastor John Hagee seized on a series of 'blood moons' to predict that time was nearly up for the human race in 2007.

Devotees of the Blood Moon Prophecy predicted that the world would end on September 28, 2015 – it didn't.

YouTube channel Nibiru Planet X 2016 says, 'The video you are about to watch is going to change everything you have been taught and everything that you believe in.

'This will show you the real reason why the moon has been turning a blood red... it is because planet Nibiru was next to it and casting its red shadow upon the moon.'

The video does seem to show a red 'twin' of the moon in the sky – but it's just lens flare, cleverly manipulated to stoke people's fears.

Bad news – you are going to have to buy Christmas presents for everyone, after all.

What is Nibiru – and is it really going to kill us all?

What is Nibiru - and is it really going to kill us all?

In 1979, a NASA probe found a mysterious 'extra' planet in our solar system – which is set to collide with Earth and KILL US ALL next month.

Except, of course, that it's all bollocks.

The mysterious extra planet Nibiru has no basis in scientific fact, has never been seen, cannot be seen with the naked eye, and won't be killing us all in 2016, or ever.

Soviet-born American writer Zecharia Sitchin first wrote about Nibiru in his hit 1976 book 'The 12th Planet' where he claimed it was inhabited by a race of 'ancient aliens' – the Annunaki – who had created the human race.

Sitchin's work remains in print and has a devoted following around the world.

But the myth of Nibiru has lived on on internet conspiracy sites – with believers rehashing the stories of a 'missing planet' with surprising regularity.

Believers in the Mayan Apocalypse were keen on the idea that Nibiru might smash into our planet to coincide with their doomsday prophecy. NASA has thoroughly debunked the Nibiru myth via its Beyond 2012 page, saying, "The story started with claims that Nibiru, a supposed planet discovered by the Sumerians, is headed toward Earth.

"This catastrophe was initially predicted for May 2003, but when nothing happened the doomsday date was moved forward to December 2012 and linked to the end of one of the cycles in the ancient Mayan calendar at the winter solstice in 2012 — hence the predicted doomsday date of December 21, 2012."

"Nibiru and other stories about wayward planets are an Internet hoax. There is no factual basis for these claims. If Nibiru or Planet X were real and headed for an encounter with the Earth in 2012, astronomers would have been tracking it for at least the past decade, and it would be visible by now to the naked eye."

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Moment friends arrive at superhero carnival dressed as something else entirely

20:55, 12 Aug 2016 Updated 20:56, 12 Aug 2016 By Scott Campbell

mirror.co.uk

Awkward moment friends arrive at superhero fancy dress carnival wearing bloodied tampon costumes



Two friends turned heads when they arrived at an annual carnival dressed as used tampons – where everyone else was wearing superhero costumes.

Liam O'Farrell and Ashley Prust stood out from the crowd at Combe Martin, Devon which mostly consisted of groups dressed as characters from story books and superheroes.

In contrast Ashley and Liam went with their top halves covered with red paint and bottom halves dressed in white trousers – each complete with their own Tampax packaging sporting the slogan: "Having a bloody good time".

Talking about the idea behind their unusual costumes, Liam said: "I think we just wanted to push the boundaries of people's humour and liven things up a bit. Who knows what we will do next year."



They said they wanted to push the boundaries at the annual carnival event



costumes were ruled

The graphic

Liam O'Farrell

appropriate for the popular family celebration

Incredibly the graphic costumes were deemed appropriate for the popular family event.

Combe Martin Parish Council's chairman Peter James said he did not oppose the carnival committee's decision to approve the entry.

He said: "Personally, I view it as humorous comment on a natural bodily function experienced by half of the world's population."

Mr James went on so say he thought the spectacle held far less shock value than a Damien Hirst piece.



It even had the support of the local Parish Council chair

In fact his own son was involved in the creation of an "Ebola victim" themed float two years ago at the village's carnival parade, coinciding with the outbreak of the disease in Africa.

Mr James said: "The float on Ebola two years ago was a comment on the media hysteria surrounding the possibility of the first world being affected by the problems the third world experience as a daily reality."

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Liam O'Farrell

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Stuff Kiwi remains identified more than a century later on WWI battlefield in Belgium



Auckland War Memorial / Supplied Henry John Innes Walker's portrait, from his Auckland War Memorial Museum profile

A Kiwi soldier's remains have been discovered and identified more than a century after his death on a World War I battlefield in Belgium.

Archaeologists said the bone material, a medallion, whistle and binoculars could only belong to Henry John Innes Walker, of Auckland.

The army captain was killed in combat on April 25,1915 at Ypres, Belgium near the boarder with France.

According to this Auckland War Memorial Museum profile, Walker served in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, of the 1st Battalion.

Archaeologists on a television special have been assessing the remains of 45 soldiers in hopes of a rare identification, Belgium's HLN reports.

Walkers descendants would be notified and his remains moved to a final resting place.

Send us your photos, videos and tip-offs:

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Model's Size-Q Bust Inspires Her To Become 'Ghostbusty' Psychic

huffingtonpost.com

She predicts she's not done with boob jobs yet.

09/01/2016 11:07 am ET David MoyeReporter, The Huffington Post

A former showgirl and model has become a professional psychic, and she credits her Q breasts for the career change.

Lacey Wildd believes the universe convinced her to get more than 100 separate operations to enhance her breasts to gargantuan proportions so she could then have a platform to become a spiritual medium and ghost buster.

Now, Wildd has a new career and a new professional name: "Ghostbusty."

Who could have predicted that? Wildd for one.

"Everything happens for a reason and I know I was supposed to have huge boobs to help the world one soul at a time," she told Barcroft TV.

Wildd says she can talk to dead people and often passes on messages she gets from the other side.

"I told one woman she had to go and get a mammogram and it turned out she was suffering from breast cancer. She told me later that I saved her life," Wildd said.

In the last 20 years, the 46-year-old Florida woman estimates she's spent more than \$250,000 in a quest to have the world's biggest breasts.

How big? Wildd's breasts each weigh around 20 pounds, according to HLN.com.

She's suffered complications over the years because of them, including a ripped pectoral muscle and ripped veins.

There have been other unintended consequences, according to TLC, which featured her on its "My Strange Addiction" series back in January, 2014.

"You know what's hilarious? I lose stuff in [my cleavage]," she said. "I had to go and buy the big phone because I would lose my other phone constantly inside there."

Whether Wildd — or "Ghostbusty" — has true psychic ability is a matter of opinion, but she's made one prediction she guarantees will come true.

"I am going to get more surgeries," she told Barcroft. "I think that a lot of people think, 'Oh what an ego', but the truth is — I am fake, but I am also spiritual, and why can't I be both?"

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By Ellen Castelow, Contributing Writer



In years gone by, numerous customs were observed to ensure that misfortune would not befall us and our loved ones. We may like to think that we live in a sophisticated age, but even in the 21st. century, many customs and superstitions linger on.

Different parts of the country have their own particular superstitions designed to bring good fortune, health and wealth to their house and occupants. Even outside the

home certain things had to be done first. For example, to protect the house from witches a rowan tree had to be planted, and under no circumstances must hawthorn be brought into the house before May Day as it belonged to the Woodland God and would bring bad luck!

In days gone by food preparation was surrounded by so many taboos it is amazing anyone got anything to eat. Many housewives believed that food would be spoilt if it was stirred 'widdershins' - that is, in the opposite direction to that of the sun. Everyone knows that 'a watched pot never boils' and in Dorset it is common knowledge that a slow-boiling kettle is bewitched and may contain a toad!

In Yorkshire, housewives used to believe that bread would not rise if there was a corpse in the vicinity, and to cut off both ends of the loaf would make the Devil fly over the house!

Once at the table, there were numerous other things to watch out for. The best known of course is not to have 13 people at the table, and should someone spill the salt, a pinch had to be thrown over the left shoulder into the eyes of the Devil. Crossed knives at the table signify a quarrel, while a white tablecloth left on a table overnight means the household will need a shroud in the near future.

Two women must not pour from the same tea-pot, if they do, a quarrel will ensue. In Somerset a double-yolked egg was viewed with concern as it foretold of a hurried wedding due to a pregnancy.

To pass on the stairs is unlucky, but to stumble going up foretells a wedding, but to break a mirror means seven years bad luck.



William Hogarth - Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism

William Hogarth's Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism

Weddings have a host of superstitions and woe betide the bride who ignores them! These are well known and still carried out today. No modern bride will allow her bridegroom to see her on the wedding day before she gets to the church, and if she is wise she will not have put on her whole 'ensemble' before the wedding day without leaving off some part of it. Usually she leaves her veil off or takes off one shoe. To be kissed by a passing chimney sweep is very good luck, but it is a very lucky bride these days who can find a chimney sweep on the way to the church! Centrally heated houses have a lot to answer for!

When the newly married couple reach their new home, it is a tradition that the bride be carried over the threshold by the bridegroom. This is to avoid the evil spirits that gather at the threshold.

8/10/2016 British superstitions

Pregnancy and childbirth have always been surrounded by magical rites and charms, and the new mother, even in these modern times, makes sure some are still respected.

Choosing the pram before the baby is born is quite safe, but it must not be delivered to the home until after the baby is born. In parts of North Yorkshire it is the custom when visiting the new baby for the first time, to place a silver coin in it's hand.

Carrying a new baby three times around the house will protect the child from colic. It was also believed that teething troubles could be eased if the gums were rubbed with the mother's gold wedding ring. Nowadays, well tried folk remedies like these are only used as a last resort after the midwife and Dr. Spock have had their say!

It is easy to dismiss superstition as absurd, but only those who can break a mirror without a second thought are entitled to do so.

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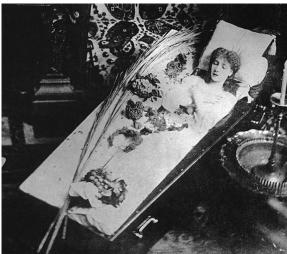
The Broom Corn Seed Funeral Swindle - Haunted Ohio Books

hauntedohiobooks.com

This is the official website of the 7-volume Haunted Ohio series and the Ghosts of the Past series by Ohio author Chris Woodyard

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The Broom Corn Seed Funeral Swindle. Sarah Bernhardt shamming death in her coffin.

Who among us has not fantasized wistfully about faking their own death and disappearing? Hands?

Recently this helpful article about faking death for various, mostly criminal, reasons, sent me to my files of vintage insurance fraud for some amusing and perhaps instructive anecdotes. Just don't tell anyone you heard it here...

Obviously the art of disguise figures heavily in faking death. Mrs Daffodil posted recently on a Victorian urban legend about a funerary scam in which the "corpse" was nicely painted to simulate death's pallor. The peerless master in this next story, however, not only impersonated the corpse, but his own widow, leaving us gasping at the audacity and applauding his self-reliance.

A REMARKABLE INSURANCE FRAUD.

A most remarkable fraud is that of the man Kumf, who was recently imprisoned in Germany for collecting insurance money on his own life. This man was a skilful impersonator, and, disguised as a woman, he applied for an insurance on his own life. As the husband of the applicant he presented himself for medical examination, was accepted, and the policy issued. In course of time he feigned sickness, and was attended by a short-sighted old physician he had selected as a man easily to be duped. One day during his spell of sickness he got up guietly, disguised himself once more as his wife, went to the insurance office, paid a premium about due, and tearfully announced the grievous sickness of the insured. The company seem to have suspected that this illness was not at all genuine, for, having casually asked the name of the attending physician, they sent to that gentleman, whose replies to their questions, however, allayed their suspicions. One day this doctor was called in great haste and told that Kumf was dead. The old fellow does not appear to have been very conscientious or painstaking. On his arrival at the house, he was met by Kumf, this time disguised as the wife or alleged widow, and taken to a darkened room in which lay a corpse. His examination of this must have been nominal, for in a short space of time he guitted the house, leaving behind him the required death certificate. As the bereaved widow, Kumf attended the interment of what purported to be his own body. Still as the widow of himself, he obtained the insurance money on his own life, and his little plot had answered admirably. Unfortunately for him, however, he got intoxicated, first with success and then with liquor, whereupon he neglected to keep up the disguise, went about as the dead man redivivus, was detected, and now languishes in gaol. The Daily Democrat [Huntington, IN] 17 August 1889: p. 3

Well, he was brilliant up to that last bit. It is disheartening that someone who had taken such pains was, in the end, so careless. Why, if you wanted to appear to be dead, wouldn't you stay the hell away from places you are known? A disappointing lapse in an otherwise flawless plan.

As the Bloomberg article on faking your own death suggested, the scheme might be more appealing than bankruptcy to those with a large amount of debt.

BRINGING A 'CORPSE' TO LIFE.

An ingenious female, living in the Boulevard de Rochechouart (says the Paris correspondent of the Daily Telegraph), lately failed in business, and a writ was issued for the sale of her effects. On Saturday an officer of the Court, or huissier, went with a police inspector to the woman's abode, in order to seize her goods, but he rang the bell of her door in vain. As the key of the dwelling, however, was in its place, the inspector turned it and the pair then entered the rooms of the debtor, in one of which a strange and sombre scene was presented to their startling sight. On a bed in the centre of the room was the apparently dead body of the female fraud, laid out in all the trappings of woe, and ready for the French equivalent of a wake. Around the presumed corpse were ranged six tall candlesticks, with lighted tapers therein. The huissier, deeming that he had to deal with a genuine dead body, instantly prepared to withdraw with his writ, but the police inspector, more inquisitive and suspicious than the process server, went over to the bed, and, attracted by the extraordinary plumpness of the arms of the corpse, pinched them with considerable vehemence. There was an instantaneous bringing of the dead to life. The corpse chalked carefully as to its face —sat up in its shroud, spoke words to the effect that the trick had failed, and confessed all. The candles were guickly snuffed out, the mourning drapery pulled down, and the process-server proceeded speedily to confiscate everything appertaining either to life or death in the domicile of the deceitful female debtor. Auckland [NZ] Star 31 May 1890: p. 4

Life insurance was the more usual motive in these cases. I suspect that this is the story that inspired the plot of *The Thin Man*.

"THE DEATH GAMBLE."

SUPPOSED INSURANCE FRAUD.

NEW YORK, August 3

When it was disclosed that Henry Schwartz, of San Francisco, an inventor, who was supposedly killed by an explosion in his laboratory, carried a life insurance of 180,000 dollars, the authorities became suspicious. Examination of the body by a dentist showed that the teeth in the dead man's head were not Schwartz's. Later, the wife of a labourer, named Rodrigeus [sic], reported that her husband was missing. She inspected fragments of the body and believed that it was her husband. A warrant has been issued for the arrest of Schwartz, on a charge of murder. *Press*, 5 August 1925: p. 9

Ah, there's the snag: procuring that all-important body for insurance purposes. In the old days, you could probably just pick up a plausible-looking corpse lying around in graveyard, back alley, or medical college, but the end of bodysnatching meant that murder was the only option.

LIFE INSURANCE FRAUD.

MURDER AND MUTILATION.

Vienna, October 28. In order to perpetrate a life insurance fraud a chauffeur named Toman murdered an unknown man, removed the eyes and nose, to prevent recognition, and dressed the body in his clothes, containing personal letters. Toman has escaped. *Dominion*, 30 October 1911: p. 5

Of course, if you were actually fond of the soon-to-be-corpse, there was always that old standby: bricks in the coffin.

Audacious Attempt to Defraud an Insurance Company.

A Hungarian count, named Enling, found himself lately in New York with a curious household upon his hands, consisting of a wife ten years older than himself, and a handsome mistress, whose position was recognised by Mrs Enling without annoyance. He was also almost destitute, but found money enough to take out a policy for 10,000 dollars upon the life of his mistress, who fortunately soon after fell sick. A doctor who was called in, who seems to have been a very incompetent physician, and after the farce had been played a short while, the girl shammed death, deceived the physician, and successfully lay for inspection by friends for about an hour. Then the coffin came, and full arrangements were made for the funeral. After the obsequies, Enling lost no time in making his claim upon the insurance company. Something in the case, however aroused their suspicions, and they got an order from the Board of Health to exhume the coffin, which, upon inspection, proved to contain nineteen bricks carefully held in place by some slips of board. The undertaker has since confessed to having shared in the business for a bribe of 250 dols, and Enling and the woman have both been arrested. Great interest is shown by the public in the case, and Barnum, whose monster show is to open very soon, has bought the coffin and eighteen surviving bricks—for one of the nineteen has been stolen by a curiosity hunter—for 1000 dollars. Star 27 July 1874: p. 3

Here we see again the importance of the Incompetent Physician, a pivotal figure in domestic poisonings or pseudocides.

In this next case, how different things would have been if Dr. Bassett's wife could have recognized his extra-domestic interests without annoyance.

A New Way to Get Rid of a Wife.

We announced on Saturday, that Dr. Bassett was drowned from the Southerner, on her way from Cleveland to Detroit. It now seems there is a little romance in the story, and Dr. Bassett is still alive and kicking. A gentleman came on board of the Southerner, and purchased a ticket for himself, calling his name Morse. The clerk gave him a state room and told him he should be compelled to put another man in the room with him. All satisfactory. Mr. Morse was very indifferently dressed. In a very short time, a person very genteelly dressed called for a ticket under the name of Dr. Bassett. The clerk gave him a berth in the state room with Mr. Morse. In the passage up, the story was started by Morse, that Dr. Bassett had fell overboard, while in the act of vomiting. All credited it. After a few moments, the Captain came to the conclusion, that it was singular that no

other person than Mr. Morse saw the accident, and some surmised foul play. Dr. Bassett's baggage was looked for in his room, but nothing but an old russet leather valise, with his name on it, could be found. This appeared rather singular for so genteel a traveller, who at least would require a change of linen. Thus matters remained until after the boat's arrival at our wharf, and Mrs. Bassett was telegraphed that she was a widow.

On reviewing the whole circumstances, it was concluded that Mr. Morse ought to be arrested and an investigation had. Accordingly, a warrant was obtained and an officer took charge of him. Mr. Morse and Dr. Bassett, from the story of the prisoner, are *one* and the same man, and the unfortunate plot was a stratagem to rid himself of his wife at the east. He tells the story thus: When he got the ticket, he wore an old suit. As soon as he got the key of his state room, he entered at once, and placed upon his person another suit of clothes and a pair of false whiskers and went to the clerk for another ticket, as Dr. Bassett, which he says is his real name. The drowning scene was got up for the eastern market, where he has a wife, and desires it for home consumption.

But here again, is the dilemma. The doctor is a stranger here and the last we heard from him, he had not been able to prove that *he was himself*, or in other words, that he was the identical Dr. Bassett, and the police still hold him a prisoner, until he can make satisfactory evidence, that Dr. Bassett is not now a drowned man in Lake Erie. *Detroit Tribune*, *9th. Pittsburgh* [PA] *Daily Post* 18 September 1850: p. 2

If you were Mrs. Bassett, called upon to identify the scoundrel, what would you do? I suppose it would have depended on whether she was the beneficiary of any will or life insurance policies.

Our final tale has some instructive points: the introduction of the cholera motif; the purchase of chloride of lime; the creation of the speedily-doomed McFadden. But the elaborate plot quickly collapsed under the sheer weight of numbers...

THE SHAM DEATH AT LEBANON

Mayor of Eaton the Dead Man.

Attempt to Realize \$20,000 on Life Insurance.

Arrest of all the Parties to the Fraud.

[From the Cincinnati Gazette 20th.]

All the facts and incidents connected with the reported sudden death of a man near Lebanon, Ohio, and his hasty burial at Eaton, seem to have came to light, and we present them below in detail. The whole affair reveals a long premeditated plot of fraud, on the part of heretofore respectable citizens of both Eaton and the vicinity of Lebanon; and although the parties implicated may not be convicted of crime, their criminal intentions seem very strikingly manifest, and no one will envy them the reputation they have made for themselves in this matter.

On Monday, the 24th, a man, who gave his name as W.T. McFadden, rode out from Cincinnati in the omnibus driven by Abner L. Ross, and got out at Frank Richardson's near Lebanon, having complained of being sick on the way out. In the evening Frank Richardson went into Lebanon, reported that McFadden had died of cholera within

twenty minutes after stopping at his house, telegraphed Mary McFadden, care of B.M. Batchelder, Eaton, that her husband was dead, and bought a coffin which he took home with him. The undertaker wished to go with him and encoffin the corpse, but his services were persistently declined. It has been ascertained also that Mr. Richardson purchased some chloride of lime and peppermint drops, when he was town after the coffin, the use of which will appear in the sequel.

On Tuesday morning, when everybody was supposed to be absorbed in Christmas festivities, Mr. Richardson called in a few neighbors, as they supposed, to lay out the corpse, but they found the coffin closed and they were only asked to help lift it into a spring wagon. On asking to see the corpse, their attention was directed to the offensive smell coming from the coffin, and warned of the danger of catching the cholera, and the lid was not removed.

Dr. N.S. Richardson, brother of Frank Richardson, formerly surgeon of the 12th Ohio cavalry and a practicing physician of Eaton, was the only person present during the reported death of McFadden. In reference to his part in the affair, it is said that on Monday he left Eaton with the declared intention of meeting McFadden at Lebanon, to close a contract for the sale to him of a tract of land in the West.

On Tuesday Dr. Richardson returned to Eaton, and stated that he met McFadden according to agreement, but that immediately after his arrival upon an omnibus at Frank Richardson's, he was taken violently ill with an attack of cholera and died.

Dr. Richardson then engaged an undertaker to go to Lebanon with a horse, to bring the coffin containing the remains to Eaton for interment. He also visited a clergyman, and requested him to hold a brief burial service at the Methodist Episcopal church in the evening, which, owing to other engagements, the minister was unable to perform. The undertaker started for Lebanon, and when four miles beyond Middletown met Frank Richardson with the coffin said to contain the corpse, in a spring wagon. The coffin was transferred to the hearse, which was driven rapidly to Eaton, B.M. Batchelder, who accompanied the undertaker, urging him to apply the whip. The coffin arrived in the evening, about 6 o'clock and Dr. Richardson, securing the assistance of three or four citizens, had the supposed remains conveyed immediately to the burial ground and interred.

A woman personating Mrs. McFadden was present when the corpse arrived, and was loud in her passionate cries to see her dead husband, but the stench from the coffin and the danger of contagion were urged upon her, and the gratification of her wishes was denied.

On account of the suddenness of the reported death, and the secrecy with which the corpse was encoffined and removed, suspicion was aroused in the minds of the citizens of Lebanon that there was something wrong in the affair. They telegraphed to parties in Eaton, and officer Wampler and an assistant started over to Eaton, with warrants to arrest Dr. Richardson and Batchelder. They arrived about midnight, and learning the circumstances of the interment, their suspicions were strengthened, and they made the arrests. Early on Wednesday morning the undertaker was sent to disinter the remains. Upon opening the grave, it was found that other parties had preceded them; the coffin had been broken open and its contents removed during the night. Here was more

mystery, which was not solved till Dr. Richardson, seeing the plot would all come to light sooner or later, made a confession the same day, to the Prosecuting Attorney, that McFadden held a life insurance policy in favor of his wife for \$20,000, that Batchelder, who is an agent for a life insurance company, McFadden and himself had entered into a plot to publish McFadden's death, while McFadden should secrete himself, and thus secure the \$20,000, which was to be divided among them, that the coffin contained broom corn seed, [cheaper than bricks?] which they had removed after the interment, so that, should the insurance company institute a search, this evidence of their guilt would not exist. The story was confirmed by finding the broom corn seed where Dr. Richardson said he deposited it.

Where was McFadden? The statements of Dr. Richardson and Batchelder in regard to his whereabouts were not satisfactory. But during the day Mr. Ross, who drove the omnibus in which McFadden rode to Lebanon, arrived in Eaton, and in one of the little crowds he met about town, talking over the strange affair, he espied the missing McFadden, and who should he prove to be but his Honor the Mayor of Eaton, Mr. [Luther C.] Abbott. When charged by Mr. Ross with being his late sick passenger, he stoutly denied it, but on being taken into the presence of Dr. Richardson he had to give up. Whether he has been arrested or not we do not know. Frank Richardson, however, was arrested, and in the same spring wagon in which he drove away the full coffin, he was compelled on Thursday to ride back with the empty coffin, beside an officer. As the wagon was driven along the streets of Lebanon an immense crowd, mostly of boys, followed, crying out, "Where's your broom-corn seed?" "What's the price of broom-corn seed?" He and his brother; the doctor, and Batchelder, are now lying in the jail at Lebanon, waiting further developments.

The Dayton journal, in its account of the affair, says:

It appears that policies for \$20,000 insurance in the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company of Brooklyn, of which B.M. Batchelder, of Eaton, was agent for that place were taken for W. T. McFadden, who seems to have been a fictitious personage. A policy for \$5,000 was taken in the same interest in the Mutual Benefit in Dayton of which Mr. I.H. Kiersted is agent, and \$5,000 in the Connecticut Mutual, of which Dr. Jewett is agent.

We understand that Frank Richardson disclaims any participation in the plot, until after the enacted death in his house, but the fact that the family were all opportunely absent on that interesting occasion; that he had borrowed the spring wagon; and had it there in readiness before McFadden arrived, and had also borrowed sacks to hold the broomcorn seed, seem to indicate special preparations for the part he was to perform.

The charge of murder against these parties will, of course, have to be withdrawn, as no murdered man can be found, and what crime can be substituted in its place will puzzle the prosecuting attorney to determine. *Louisville [KY[Daily Courier* 31 December 1866: p. 1

Top tip: The fewer people involved in your insurance fraud, the better.

Alas, the conspirators seem to have undone themselves by their cleverness. Even though quick burials were mandated for cholera deaths, the undue haste aroused suspicions of murder. This apparently was not their first funeral scam:

We learn from the Eaton Democrat that "others matters have been brought to light, which go to show that this was not the first operation of the kind, in which these gentlemen have been engaged, and as they have realized money on some of them, they will be, or have been arrested on charges which come within the power of the law. The arrested parties were Dr. Richardson, and Bachelder, of this place, and Frank Richardson of Lebanon. L.C. Abbott, the *most honorable* Mayor of our city, is the man who personated the McFadden, who was reported dead, and it also turns out that McFadden is a myth, there being no such man, and the wife who was so broken-hearted at the news of his death, a "woman of the town," from New York. The man who passed examination for insurance under the name of McFadden, is said to be a Mr. Blake, a resident of Kentucky." *The Daily Empire* [Dayton, OH] 7 January 1867: p. 3

And what inspired the Mayor of the county seat of Preble County, who was also a lawyer and former Prosecuting Attorney, to participate in such a plot? Bad business investments? Tapping the public till? Eaton was a rather unlucky little town, decimated first by cholera in 1849 and by a massive fire in 1859. Perhaps Mayor Abbott did not have fire insurance.

I am at a loss to understand how he escaped arrest and prosecution; he was re-elected Mayor (to much adulation in the local papers) and was still practicing law in Eaton in the 1870s.

Other fake-death insurance frauds?

I have the borrowed broom-corn seed sacks waiting. chriswoodyard8 AT gmail.com

[Thanks to Michael Robinson for the initial link about faking death.]

Undine of Strange Company shares two brilliant cases of insurance fraud: The Wrath of Walburga and Give the Howards a Hand! Thanks, Undine—your posts are always a jaw-dropping pleasure!

Chris Woodyard is the author of *The Victorian Book of the Dead, The Ghost Wore Black, The Headless Horror, The Face in the Window*, and the 7-volume *Haunted Ohio* series. She is also the chronicler of the adventures of that amiable murderess Mrs Daffodil in *A Spot of Bother: Four Macabre Tales*. The books are available in paperback and for Kindle. Indexes and fact sheets for all of these books may be found by searching hauntedohiobooks.com. Join her on FB at Haunted Ohio by Chris Woodyard or The Victorian Book of the Dead.

Posted by Chris Woodyard

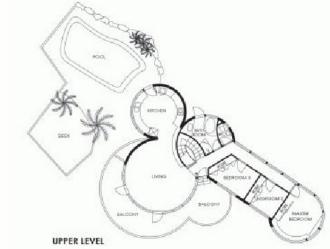
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This home is shaped exactly like a penis

news.com.au

Australia's 'Buckingham Phallus' is on the market

July 28, 20162:01pm



Yes, this house is shaped like a penis. Picture: Belle Property



Get your hands on this hot property. Picture: Belle Property

THERE'S some seriously hot property for sale.

It's got four bedrooms, two bathrooms and it's shaped like a penis.

Yes, a penis, a wedding tackle, love dart or twig and berries.

Real estate agents say it's "unique and very private" — that sure is one way to describe it.

Source: Supplied

Known as "Buckingham Phallus", it's close to Browns Bay and surrounded by vegetation.

It's on McCarrs Creek Road in Church Point, a quaint suburb in Sydney's northern beaches.

The mischievous floor plan was designed by architect Stan Symonds, who had a thing for curvature, and was erected in 1958.



The home was sold for \$1.35 million 14 months ago but the owner was not up for a lengthy stay so it's back on the market.

The asking price for the elongated abode is between \$1.37 million and \$1.5 million.

"The floorplan is something you don't see every day but it works well with the rest of the house which is generous in size," Belle Property Mona Vale residential sales consultant Stephen Allen told news.com.au.



This residence is very private. Picture: Belle Property

"It's very, very interesting."



The spacious loungeroom at the home on McCarrs Creek Road. Picture: Belle Property

Source: Supplied



The penis house in Church Point is back on the market. Picture: Belle Property

Source: Supplied

Bedrooms extend down the shaft of the home before opening into the living area and bathroom.

Somebody artistic or creative — or somebody with a sense of humour — is expected to grab this saucy structure.

"Most people are going to say it's a bit quirky for them, I can see that coming from families in particular," Mr Allen said. "It's ideally going to suit small families or first-home buyers."

The first open house is on Saturday.

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Passengers freak out after woman throws box of live insects on train metro.co.uk

Friday 26 Aug 2016 1:09 pm

Passengers freaked out when the insects swarmed the cabin (Picture: Getty)

It sounds like something out of a horror movie – but these poor passengers actually experienced it.

A woman trying to sell live insects on the NYC subway got so angry after being pushed by teenagers, she threw the insect box across the train.

She had been asking subway riders on the D train whether they wanted to buy any of the live crickets and worms when she was purposefully pushed, the New York Post reported.

Passengers began screaming as they tried to avoid the bugs, which invaded the whole cabin.

The train stopped midway on Manhattan Bridge with the passengers trapped inside with the insects (File Picture: Getty)

Chris Calabrese, 29, told the Post: 'It was pandemonium...It was the craziest thing I've ever seen on a train.

'Everyone had crickets on their arms. My girlfriend was crying.'

Eventually, someone managed to pull the emergency brake but this only made the situation worse.

The train then stopped in the middle of Manhattan Bridge, turning the air conditioner off and leaving passengers trapped inside with the insects in the excessive heat.

Passengers remained trapped in the train for 30 minutes, before the train continued to the next station, where police officers were waiting.

The woman selling the insects was then removed from the train by officers.

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Burkini-only event at French water park canceled

ksbw.com



- UPDATED 8:13 AM PDT Aug 11, 2016
- Tweet



Giorgio Montersino/Wikimedia Commons Giorgio Montersino/Wikimedia

(CNN) —А planned burkinionly day for Muslim women at a water park in France has been

canceled by city officials after threats were sent to the event's organizers.

Burkini-only event at French water park sparks outrage

A burkini-only day for Muslim women at a water park in France has sparked outrage among some politicians and French citizens.

The scheduled event sparked outrage among some politicians and French citizens earlier this month because it was restricted to women wearing all-over swimming outfits often referred to as "burkinis."

Smile 13, a women's community group, first posted the announcement about the event on its Facebook page, saying "the goal of the burkini is precisely not to tempt since it's a loose outfit "

It added that "women wandering around in bikinis are more at risk for rape."

The burkini day was due to be held next month at Speedwater Park in Les Pennes-Mirabeau, near Marseille, and was open to women and children, including boys under 10.

However, the organizers said they received threats over the plans, including a letter with a picture of bullets.

Concerns over public order

In a joint statement issued Monday, the water park and city officials said the event "poses problems that go beyond the normal context of the activity of this park."

"Neither Speedwater Park nor the City of Pennes-Mirabeau wish to be the scene of troubles of public order that would be generated by issues that go beyond their territorial activities. Indeed, extreme ideological positions are taking advantage of the polemic linked to this event

to engage in conflicts which neither Speedwater Park nor the City of Pennes-Mirabeau wish to participate in.

"In common agreement, Speedwater Park and the City of Pennes-Mirabeau have thus decided to not proceed with the request of the association Smile 13."

News of the cancellation came after Mélisa Thivet from Smile 13 told CNN Saturday that the group was "surprised by the magnitude of the reaction" to its original announcement about the event on Facebook.

Thivet said group members "feel quite in danger" after a threatening letter, which included a picture of bullets, was received.

Outpouring of racial hatred condemned

In a later statement, relayed to CNN by Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France, an organization working against Islamophobia in France, Smile 13 representatives said: "We are sad and concerned to witness the outpouring of racist hatred, obscenities and threats aiming at us, as an organization but also as individuals."

Stéphane Ravier, mayor of the 7th district of Marseille and member of the far-right Front National party, welcomed news that the "scandalous" event had been canceled.

In a tweet, he described it as a "victory of the patriots."

In April 2011, France became the first European country to ban wearing in public the burga, a full-body covering that includes a mesh over the face, and the nigab, a full-face veil with an opening for the eyes.

However, as the burkini day was planned as a private event, it would have been deemed legal.

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Indian mother-in-law tries to burn baby alive INSIDE pregnant daughter

02:39 EST, 7 September 2016 | dailymail.co.uk



Indian mother-in-law tries to burn baby alive INSIDE pregnant daughter by throwing acid over her after astrologer predicted it would be a girl

• Victim, named as 27-year-old S Girija, was attacked in Nellore, India

Nellore, India

Her mother-in-law and sister-in-law poured powerful

acid on her stomach

- · Police say mother-in-law is on the run after trying to kill baby and victim
- S Girija is recovering in hospital with severe burns over 30% of her body

By Gareth Davies For Mailonline

A pregnant mother is recovering in hospital after her Indian in-laws poured acid on her bump in an attempt to fry the baby after a prediction it would be a girl.

The 27-year-old victim - named as S Girija by police in Nellore, eastern India - collapsed in agony when her husband's mother and her sister-in-law poured a powerful acid on her baby bump.

Investigators believe that the women were attempting to kill both Girija and her unborn child after an astrologer said she was expecting a girl.





A pregnant mother is recovering in hospital after her Indian in-laws poured acid on her bump in an attempt to fry the baby after a prediction it would be a girl

The 27-year-old victim - named as S Girija by police in Nellore, eastern India - collapsed in agony when her husband's mother and her sister-in-law poured a powerful acid on her baby bump

Investigators believe that the women were attempting to kill both Girija (pictured, right) and her unborn child after an astrologer said she was expecting a girl

Police have confirmed the victim's mother-in-law is on the run, but her husband and his father, who were not named in reports, have been arrested in the attempted murder investigation.

Girija already has an 18-month-old daughter and police believe she was attacked to stop her husband fathering a second girl.

The attack came just days of the victim's mother-in-law had consulted a fortune teller over the baby's gender, according to local reports.

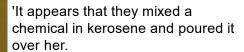


Medics say she has severe burns over 30 percent of her body.

Police have confirmed the victim's mother-inlaw has vanished, but her husband and his father, who were not named in reports, have been arrested in the attempted murder investigation

Girija already has an 18-month-old daughter and police believe she was attacked to stop her husband fathering a second girl

A senior officer told local media: 'We are waiting for chemical analysis report.



'We are on a look-out for Girija's mother-in-law.'

Many Indians from rural or traditional backgrounds believe female children are worth less than boys.

One commentator told local media: 'This is typical of the ignorance about and prejudice against a girl child.'



Comments (38)

Erica83, cambridgeshire, United Kingdom, about 18 hours ago

It's sick how these women don't want girls. If their parents/in laws did the same they wouldn't be here. Poor poor woman, to live in a family if such hatred. Did her husband know these plans?

snowflake, Manchester, United Kingdom, about 18 hours ago

FGS!

lamyouonlydifferent, Telford, United Kingdom, about 18 hours ago

These people need education not religion

Helen Kay 23, Toronto, Canada, about 18 hours ago

Did the baby survive?

AC, London, United Kingdom, about 18 hours ago

India.....wow

newsandviews, Blighty, United Kingdom, about 18 hours ago

LUNATIC!

thecatincebu, Cebu, Philippines, about 18 hours ago

That might just be the most disturbing thing I've ever read.

Marie the Nurse, London, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

Horrible

Carl Daniel Bradford, bradford, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

sicko

Kentishman, Dover, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

12AD

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Bushwalker spies mythical creature: claim

heraldsun.com.au

Herald Sun September 6, 2016 7:06pm Yowie Park. Claire Timmins 3 in Yowie cutout Kilcoy. and pic

s of Yowie statue. Pic Glenn Barnes Story Kathleen

A BUSHWALKER claims to have spotted the mythical Yowie in the Darling Downs mountain ranges near Toowoomba.

In an audio interview posted this week on the Yowie Hunters YouTube page, the woman says she was 6m away from Australia's answer to the Himalayan Yeti and the North American Sasquatch.



QLD CM NEWS YOWIE 170CT14

"It was probably around seven foot tall, it had a head like a gorilla and long arms, I couldn't see it from the waist down because it was walking through the long grass," she said.

The woman, who was not identified, said the creature sat down in the long grass and ignored her.

"I tried to get it to turn around but I was scared and didn't want to aggravate him," she said.

The Yowie Hunters run the Australian Yowie Research website and say they have recorded more than 10 sightings in Queensland in the past five years.

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Camel, teen driver collide far from desert on Alabama road

yahoo.com

September 14, 2016

SARDIS, Ala. (AP) — Far from the desert, a teenage driver collided with a camel on an Alabama road, injuring the driver and animal.

Sardis Police Chief James Harp tells The Gadsden Times (http://bit.ly/2c887t9) that the camel's owner was leading it across the road when the crash happened Monday evening.

The police chief said camel owner Terry Turk waved his arms to get the driver's attention and leaped out of the way to avoid the car. But the camel crashed onto the hood, showering glass onto the driver, who was treated for minor injuries including cuts.

The chief said the camel had to be euthanized.

Harp said Turk operates Turk's Bama Bucks, which breeds deer. The company's website says its farm has also been home to other animals such as kangaroos and elk.

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Sand sculpture of busty Cape Cod mermaid draws complaints

July 10, 2016 yahoo.com

https://www.yahoo.com/news/sand-sculpture-busty-cape-cod-mermaid-draws-complaints-200256915.html?nhp=1

YARMOUTH, Mass. (AP) — A busty mermaid sculpted from sand and placed outside a popular Cape Cod restaurant is raising eyebrows and triggering complaints.

The town of Yarmouth, Massachusetts, and the local Chamber of Commerce say they fielded complaints from locals about the exaggerated proportions of the mermaid's chest. Yarmouth's police department took down photos of the sculpture from its Facebook page after residents said they found the work of art offensive.

The mermaid clad in a clamshell bikini is one of 41 sand sculptures placed around town as part of the annual Yarmouth Summer Celebration.

Salty's restaurant owner Raymond Roy tells the Cape Cod Times (http://bit.ly/29CHwRJ) he's surprised at the fuss.

Roy says the mermaid isn't nude and shouldn't be censored.

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Case closed: FBI no longer looking for D.B. Cooper

seattletimes.com

Originally published July 12, 2016 at 9:36 am Updated July 12, 2016 at 5:19 pm



FBI artist's sketches of the skyjacker known as D.B. Cooper, based on descriptions from passengers and crew of a Northwest Orient Airlines jet he hijacked between Portland and Seattle on Nov. (Anonymous/The Associated Press)

FBI artist's sketches of the skyjacker known as D.B. Cooper, based on descriptions from passengers and crew of a Northwest Orient Airlines jet he hijacked between Portland and Seattle on Nov. 24, 1971. (Anonymous/The Associated Press)

Forty-five years after a man skyjacked a Seattle-bound plane, parachuted out with \$200,000 in cash and disappeared, the FBI is closing one of its most captivating unsolved cases.

The FBI says it is ending its 45-year pursuit of D.B. Cooper and given up any real hope of closing the case file on the nation's only unsolved hijacking. But don't

think the legend — and the quest for Cooper — won't live on.

The bureau announced Tuesday that it was "redirecting resources" that had been allocated to the investigation into the Thanksgiving Eve 1971 hijacking of a Seattle-bound Boeing 727 that ended when a tall, darkcomplected man who had identified himself as "D.B. Cooper" parachuted into the pitch dark Northwest night sky with a satchel containing \$200,000 in cash. He was never seen again.

The bureau said the case, dubbed NORJAK, has been active since, becoming one of the agency's "longest and most exhaustive investigations."

Vashon Island obituary keeps it weird with D.B. Cooper FBI sketch

D.B. Cooper skyjacking cash sold at Dallas auction

Few investigations have captured the public's imagination like the Cooper hijacking, and the case has inspired everything from songs like The Byrds' "Bag Full of Money" to a string of potboiler TV shows and movies including 1981's "Pursuit of D.B. Cooper" with Robert Duvall.

Indeed, the History Channel just this week aired a two-part documentary, "D.B. Cooper: Case Closed?" promising to identify the skyjacker.

The case gained what the bureau refers to as "major case-file" status, one of only a handful in the FBI's history, meaning that it was independently funded and staffed until this week.

"On July 8, 2016, the FBI redirected resources allocated to the D.B. Cooper case in order to focus on other investigative priorities," the bureau said in a statement.

The bureau made it clear, however, that it would reopen the investigation if new or compelling evidence is uncovered.

During the course of the decades-long investigation and manhunt, the FBI has reviewed tens of thousands of leads, claims and plausible theories, conducted scores of searches, interviewed witnesses and collected evidence — all in vain.

The mystery surrounding the Nov. 24, 1971 skyjacking of a Northwest Orient Airlines flight remains unsolved.

But there were breaks in the case over the years — just none big enough to crack it open.

In 1978, a placard containing instructions for lowering the aft stairs of a 727 was found by a deer hunter east of Castle Rock, Wa., which was within the basic flight path of the plane Cooper jumped from, according to the FBI and news reports.

Then, in February 1980, an 8-year-old boy found three packets of weather-damaged cash, totaling more than \$5,000, southwest of the town of Aeriel. The money was confirmed to be from the ransom cash, and its discovery prompted speculation that Cooper may not have survived the jump.

In 2011, Marla Cooper of Reno, Nev., suggested her uncle and his brother, a former Boeing engineer, may have carried out the hijacking. The FBI was able to eliminate the man as a suspect using DNA recovered from a clipon tie the hijacker had worn.

Unlike many investigations, in which the FBI refuses to discuss the evidence, the bureau over the years has willingly provided help to other professionals attempting to identify Cooper. In 2009, the bureau worked closely with a group of citizen scientists and Cooper enthusiasts, coined the "Citizen Sleuths" by FBI Special Agent Larry Carr, who spent three years examining the Cooper case file and evidence.

New York author Geoff Gray, who in 2012 published "Skyjack: The Hunt for D.B. Cooper" based on his review of the bureau's investigative file, said he is "not so convinced that the investigation is dead or this story is over by any stretch."

Rather, he suspects the bureau is trying to stem a nonstop flow of tips from the public that are a distraction to its agents. Most, if not all, are merely recycled fragments of stories and theories that have been in circulation for years.

"I honestly think they just don't want to deal with the correspondence and the news anymore," he said.

"The tips never stopped," confirmed Seattle FBI spokeswoman Ayn Dietrich-Williams. "They are still coming in, despite our trying to dissuade the public."

Times staff reporter Christine Clarridge contributed to this report. Mike Carter: mcarter@seattletimes.com or 206-464-3706

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Tiger mauls woman to death in Chinese wildlife park - World - NZ Herald News nzherald.co.nz

The New Zealand Herald 6:00 PM Sunday Jul 24, 2016

A woman was mauled to death and another seriously injured after they jumped out of a car in a

tiger enclosure at a Chinese safari park.

Dramatic video footage captures the middle-aged woman flouting the warnings by getting out of the car, and she was killed instantly after she followed the younger woman out of the car at the Badaling Wildlife World, near the Great Wall of China.

Both had ignored repeated warnings to stay inside the vehicle, according to local media.

Sohu reported that the family - one older woman, a younger woman, a child and a man - were in the park, just over an hour north-west of Beijing, on Saturday.

The younger woman and the man are understood to have had an argument, at which point she stormed out of the car, reports Chinese media.

The older woman then followed her out - and was instantly attacked by the Siberian tiger.

The man is also understood to have tried to rescue his family members, while the child stayed in the car.

The 6,000 acre park, which allows people to either drive themselves or join a tour, tells people not to leave their vehicles at any point.

The family were eventually rescued by Badaling's staff, but there was nothing that could be done for the older woman.

The younger woman was seriously injured, an official confirmed.

This is not the first time the tigers have attacked someone in the park: two years ago, a male employee was killed by one of the tigers, SXDSD Voc reported.

Entrance to the park costs £ 5, and visitors can feed the animals - although they aren't allowed to get close to the attraction's larger residents.

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'Vampire' skeleton discovered near church now a museum exhibit

metro.co.uk

Jimmy Nsubuga for Metro.co.ukSaturday 2 Jul 2016 5:47 pm



'Vampire' skeleton discovered near church now a museum exhibit

This 'vampire' skeleton is now a museum exhibit (Picture: CEN)

A 'vampire' skeleton discovered in a grave near a church can now be viewed in a museum.

The collection of bones was found two years ago in an ancient cemetery in Kamien Pomorski, a town in northern Poland, and apparently had all the markings of a vampire burial.

Dig leader Slawomir Gorka said the man had probably been buried in the 16th century.

The skeleton had a stake driven through its leg and a small rock in its mouth.

The stone had been put in the body's mouth to apparently stop it from biting or sucking blood from its victims.

And the pierced tibia and femur (normally with iron spikes) was done to prevent the vampire from climbing out of its grave.

The bones are now the main attraction at the Kamien Museum of Land History and organisers are preparing an exclusive exhibit just for the vampire, according to Polish website fakt.pl

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Dead shark appears to have stab wounds

9:40 AM, Jul 28, 2016



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Terri Ufko

MANASOTA KEY, Fla. -- A Four in Your Corner viewer is sharing photos of a dead hammerhead shark that washed up on Manasota Key.

Terri Ufko tells Fox 4 that the shark was seen on Blind Pass Beach near Englewood on Wednesday. She says they saw stab wounds in the fish.

The police reportedly came out, but they don't know if a report was taken.

There are concerns on the community that a group of people are killing sharks in the area for fun. There is also a report of a dead shark that washed up in Venice a few days ago.

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Devil Dogs: The Mysterious Black Dogs of England - Modern

Farmer modernfarmer.com

modern farmer By Andy

Wright on June 13, 2014



Reverend Abraham Fleming recorded a famous 1577 account of a Black Shuck sighting in "A Straunge and Terrible Wunder". 1 The dog skeleton unearthed by Dig Ventures at medieval Leiston Abbey in Suffolk England that some speculated belonged to the 'devil dog.'/ Courtesy Dig Ventures 2 An aerial view of Leiston Abbey, showing a cropmark in the field adjacent to the ruin. / Courtesy Dig Ventures 1 The dog skeleton unearthed by Dig Ventures at medieval Leiston Abbey in Suffolk England that some speculated belonged to the 'devil dog.'/ Courtesy Dig Ventures 2 An aerial view of Leiston Abbey, showing a cropmark in the field adjacent to the ruin. / Courtesy Dig Ventures

It was not shaping up to be a great day for the churchgoers of Bungay, England. The congregation of St Mary's church had braved a horrible storm to attend service on August 14, 1577, when the elegant Anglican building was struck by lightning. And then the hellhound arrived.

Moments after the church was fried, a massive black dog burst through the doors, careening through the aisles. Two men knelt in prayer. The monster shot past them, and as he did he "wrung the necks of them bothe" and they fell over dead where they prayed. As quickly as he appeared, the dog vanished, leaving nothing but scorch marks on the floor and two corpses in his wake.

So recorded Reverend Abraham Fleming in "A Straunge and Terrible Wunder," an account of the bizarre happenings in the rural market town. It is one of many misdeeds attributed to

a dog called "Black Shuck" and his legend has not waned. A black dog racing across a lightening bolt adorns Bungay's coat of arms. In a 2003 song named for the beast, the English rock band The Darkness sang, accurately and succinctly, "Black Shuck / Black Shuck / That dog don't give a fuck."

A Craunge.

and terrible Wunder wrough ? bety late in the parlif Church of Bongs; a Town of no great distance from the citie of Bonuch, namely the fourth of this August, in hyere of we level raise, lighting, and funder, the like where that he had been every late.

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Reverend Abraham Fleming recorded a

Tales of monstrous black dogs, often with glowing red eyes, abound worldwide, but especially in England. Black Shuck is a popular one, but many regions have their own versions. They're called The Gurt Dog, Padfoot, Barguest, The Hairy Hound, The Yeth Hound and the Grim, among other names. In the Isle of Man they're called a Moddey Dhoo and in Scotland a Cù Sìth. Black dog legends inspired Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Hound of the Baskervilles" and a Grim makes an appearance in "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban." A cursory search will reveal numerous Black Dog Pubs, Black Dog Restaurants and Black Dog Inns scattered across England.

Mark Norman has been researching black dogs for fifteen years. He grew up in Devon, an English county known for its coastlines and rural inland that is rife with legends and myths. But he didn't develop a special affinity for black dog stories until he arrived at the University of Exeter, where he works for the student

a Black Shuck sighting in "A Straunge and Terrible Wunder".

famous 1577 account of guild. There he discovered the archives of respected English folklorist Theo Brown, including seven whole boxes of black dog lore. Norman was hooked. He is currently working on a book about black dogs using Brown's material, as well as collecting stories on his own.

Not all black dogs are bad, says Norman. While many are omens of death, "there are ones that are attached to a family in some way, there are ones that are seen as protective, there are ones that are attached to particular locations, so road dogs are common — dogs that follow a particular route for example in the countryside."

A black dog's motivation changes along with cultural perceptions of canines; in cultures where dogs are considered unclean they tend to be more nefarious.

Black dogs take many forms, but often have things in common. They are, of course, black. They are often abnormally large, with shaggy coats and have glowing, enormous eyes. But curious variations abound. There are dogs who drag chains from their necks. There are dogs with no heads and dogs with human faces. There are dogs who dissolve into mist, dogs the size of houses and dogs who walk on their hind legs.

Tales of black dogs date back centuries. The earliest recorded appearance in English literature that Norman has found is from 1127. There are plenty of reasons people tell black dog stories, he says. Some of the stories were probably concocted to keep children away from dangerous places. But many black dog stories can be attributed to smugglers who wanted to keep interlopers away from their coastal smuggling routes. Smugglers were fond of inventing all sorts of scary stories to keep pests away: Norman has heard stories of smugglers painting the body of an unlucky horse with luminous paint in order to convince townspeople that a particular road was haunted by a headless horse and coach.

And people still see black dogs.

"I still get reports," says Norman. "I've got pages of reports from various places since the year 2000, for example."

There are whole websites devoted to black dog sightings, like the encyclopedic Shuckland, which catalogs sightings by location.

Some people have claimed that black dogs are actually leopards or pumas that roam England. Others think black dogs are a kind of hallucination caused by a dream state."

And then there was the discovery this May that had news outlets breathlessly wondering if definitive evidence of Black Shuck's existence had been uncovered.

"Is this the skeleton of legendary devil dog Black Shuck who terrorised 16th century East Anglia? Folklore tells of SEVEN FOOT hell hound with flaming eyes" crowed a May 2014 Daily Mail headline.

Not quite, says Lisa Wescott Wilkins, managing director of Dig Ventures, a crowdfunded archeology excavation project. The group's team unearthed the skeleton during a dig at the ruins of an abbey dating back to the 1100s.

"No, there's no way," says Wilkins, "There's not even a dog alive besides maybe a direwolf on

'Game of Thrones' that would be seven feet tall from nose to toe – that's massive!"

The skeleton, she says, was about the size of a Great Dane. Without radio carbon dating, they can't say exactly how old the skeleton is, but they do know it suffered a wound to its leg that would have given it a significant limp and that it was buried in a grave.

The find resonated with dog lovers at the dig, Wilkins said, because "this wasn't an animal that sort of crawled off somewhere to die, this dog had clearly been taken care of and buried out back where the sort of kitchen area of the Monastery would have been of the Abbey when it was active. So when we uncovered it, we were thinking to ourselves, god, these are clearly people who had an emotional attachment to this animal and cared for it during its lifetime. So for us the big story of that sort of moment was dog owners and dog lovers, and just thinking about what it would have been like when the dog was buried."



Some people have claimed that black dogs are actually leopards or pumas that roam England. Others think black dogs are a kind of hallucination caused by a dream state. Norman allows that there may be some truth to those theories, but that he has also heard stories that he simply can't explain.

"I'm not a paranormal researcher, I'm a folklorist; so to me, what they're seeing isn't important or relevant," says Norman. "Because

what I'm interested in is what they're reporting, and how that fits into the other stories that people have reported over time, and how that shared consciousness or shared collective memory operates."

Of course, sometimes the answer is earthly, as the author of Shuckland notes on a description of a "dubious sighting":

"As the witness himself says, there's a fair chance that on both occasions this may well have been an ordinary dog."

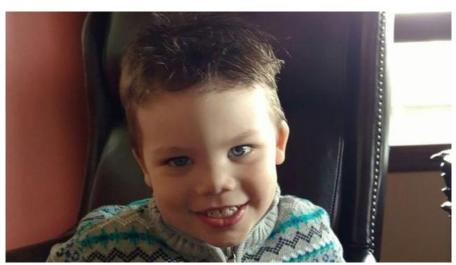


Have you seen a black dog? Mark Norman is collecting stories of sightings, and you can reach him at M.Norman@exeter.ac.uk.

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Disney firefighters were warned to stop feeding alligators

chicagotribune.com 2016-07-13



PICTURE GALLERY: A 2-year-old boy who was vacationing with his family was dragged by an alligator into the Seven Seas Lagoon at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa around 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 14.



Pedicini

Sandra Pedicini

Two months before an alligator killed a toddler at Walt Disney World, firefighters were warned to

stop feeding the reptiles at one of the resort's fire stations.

The admonitions were in emails from employees at Reedy Creek Emergency Services. Reedy Creek is the Disney-controlled taxing district that provides government services to the theme parks and surrounding areas.

The emails were obtained through a public-records request made after an alligator snatched 2-year-old Lane Graves from the shore of the Seven Seas Lagoon on June 14 and drowned him while he was on vacation with family from Nebraska. The attack took place at Grand Floridian Resort & Spa.

After that, many tourists came forward with their own stories of alligator sightings at Disney. One employee at the resort said at the time there was a problem with guests feeding the animals.

According to the emails, firefighters were feeding at least one of two alligators hanging around Fire Station 3, located off Floridian Way on Maple Road less than a half mile from Seven Seas Lagoon and less than a mile from Grand Floridian. One gator was a baby. The second was estimated to be between 4 and 5 feet long.

Reedy Creek District Administrator John Classe said he believes the feedings were not widespread throughout the resort.

Feeding alligators is illegal because it causes the animals to lose their natural fear of humans.

"You would think that the firefighters would be a little bit more in tune with the trouble that could cause and not do it," said David Hitzig, executive director of the Busch Wildlife Center, a refuge and nature center in Jupiter. "You would figure they would have more common sense than that. ... When you feed an alligator, you're attracting it to people."



Dad of boy killed by gator at Disney: Family 'overwhelmed' by support and love Sandra Pedicini

The father of Lane Graves, the 2-year-old boy killed by an alligator at Walt Disney World on Tuesday night, released a statement to a Nebraska television station Saturday.

"Melissa and I continue to deal with the loss of our beloved boy, Lane, and are overwhelmed with the support and love we have...

The father of Lane Graves, the 2-year-old boy killed by an alligator at Walt Disney World on Tuesday night, released a statement to a Nebraska television station Saturday.

"Melissa and I continue to deal with the loss of our beloved boy, Lane, and are overwhelmed with the support

and love we have ...

(Sandra Pedicini)

On April 20, communications captain Claude Rogers sent an email to Reedy Creek's fire command staff.

"It was brought to our attention firefighters are feeding the alligators (this is illegal)," Rogers' email said. "The communicators have found [one alligator] by the station, near the dumpster, and where they park their cars. As you can imagine this is making the communicators nervous because they are fearful of walking to their car and their leg becoming dinner. We have notified Animal Control to remove the alligator. In the interim could you ask your crews to stop feeding the gator."

Classe said Disney's animal-control department was contacted but he did not know whether either alligator was ever removed. Classe said the firefighters received "just a talking to and reminding — `Guys and gals, we know this isn't right, so just don't."

A Disney spokeswoman did not know Wednesday afternoon whether the gator had been removed.

Typically nuisance gators under 4 feet are relocated. Larger ones are trapped and killed by the state. The alligator that attacked Lane was estimated to be between 4 and 7 feet.

Disney World had more than 240 nuisance gator trappings in past 10 years

More than 240 nuisance alligators have been trapped on Walt Disney World property over the past decade, with more than 15 of them caught so far this year, according to records released Wednesday evening by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The commission released the data after...

More than 240 nuisance alligators have been trapped on Walt Disney World property over the past decade, with more than 15 of them caught so far this year, according to records released Wednesday evening by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

The commission released the data after...

(Sandra Pedicini)

After Rogers' initial email, he sent another one to Reedy Creek communications employees. "Several people have expressed concern of becoming alligator food because the alligator is seen out of the pond near the building, by the dumpster, and near the cars," he wrote. "The firefighters feeding the alligator only aggravates the situation..... Animal Control has been notified and I have spoken to B/C Brown requesting they tell the firefighters to stop feeding the alligator. He has already spoken to members of his crew and has passed this on to the other shifts."

Reached by phone Wednesday, Rogers told the Orlando Sentinel he could not remember who pointed out that firefighters were feeding alligators. "Someone told me, I think," he said. "I don't remember specifics as to who or what. Obviously it was by word of mouth."

A few days before Rogers' emails, Reedy Creek dispatcher Dan Lewis alerted Rogers and another official about a problem with the gators.

"Could yall tell the ops side to stop feeding these alligators, we think we have 2," Lewis wrote in an email. "They are coming out in the parking lot much more than others in the past and WE are the ones who have to walk in that parking lot every day and in the dark. They are not docile gators, they are mean and they are out looking for food because people are feeding them. It's getting uncomfortable"

Classe said he doubts the larger gator would have been involved in the attack on Lane Graves. "The gator would have to travel across a couple roadways ... to get over to the Seven Seas water body system, so it's not likely" it got over there, Classe said.

There is a pond behind the fire station that does not appear connected to other waterways.

Tim Stromsnes, president of the Reedy Creek firefighters' union, said he had heard in the past about a small alligator — about 4 feet — in that pond.

"I've never seen anybody or heard of anybody feeding it," he said. "I think he's been in there forever in that little retention pond there."

spedicini@orlandosentinel.com or 407-420-5240

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British 'donkey whisperer' translates 'ee-aws' using technology

July 27, 2016 yahoo.com

By Jane Witherspoon

(Reuters) - A self-proclaimed "donkey whisperer" is encouraging people in London to use technology to help them understand donkeys' emotions and mannerisms.

Mark Ineson, owner of "Real Donkeys" in Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, has been studying the animals for more than 20 years and says they are very emotive creatures.

Entertainment group Merlin Events has teamed up with "Real Donkeys" to offer donkey rides "with a difference" in London's Jubilee Gardens. New technology allows children to hear the animals' sounds translated into English, and into full sentences.

"We get the nudges, we get the facial expressions," he said, adding that like dogs, donkeys "give a paw, he lifts a leg to show his emotions that way," said Ineson about his 12-year-old donkey named Carl, one of 17 donkeys he owns.

Some of Ineson's donkeys have won awards such as "Best Beach Donkey".

"(We) work very closely with them, day in day out, and pick up on their mannerisms, their emotions, what they're thinking basically," Ineson said.

Chloe Couchman, a spokeswoman at Merlin Events, explained that the technology behind the translators analyses the unique sounds, frequencies and vibrations of each donkey's "ee-aww," triggering a phrase that reflects what the donkey is feeling.

"As you can see above," Ineson wrote on his website, referencing a photograph of him kissing a donkey, "I love my donkeys very much and would never swap them for the world."

Families will be able to book free rides for children on the "talking donkeys" in Jubilee Gardens until Thursday.

(Reporting by Jane Witherspoon; Editing by David Gregorio)

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Fisherman bitten by shark used 'a bit of duct tape' to patch up wound

9news.com.au



1:55am July 21, 2016

Fisherman bitten by shark used 'a bit of duct tape' to patch up wound



The skipper of a fishing charter has been hospitalised after being bitten by a shark he'd caught and hauled onto his boat.

A Gold Coast charter boat skipper hospitalised after he was bitten by a shark has told 9NEWS he taped his leg wound up with duct tape and called his mother instead of Triple Zero.

Scott van Burck, 31, said he had reeled in a one-metre reef shark in front of eight customers when it turned and bit him on his calf on the deck of his boat today.

"I just brought a shark on board and he flicked his head and it bit me on the leg," Mr van Burck told 9NEWS.

Deckhands pulled the shark away and returned it to the water, and Mr van Burck then taped up the wound himself.

[I] wrapped myself up with a bit of duct tape and a bit of padding and I said to the customers 'let's keep fishing' but they were more worried than I was," he said.

Mr van Burck said he phoned his mother instead of emergency services, but she decided to alert paramedics.

Tiana van Burck said her "first instinct was to call an ambulance" rather than drive her son to the hospital herself because she did not know the extent of his injuries.

Deckhand Adrian Gray, who detached the shark from Mr van Burck's leg using pliers, said the skipper handled the incident well.

"I've never actually seen a shark biting down like that before," he said.

Mr van Burck said he realised he was incredibly lucky the shark's teeth had not nicked an artery.

He said he would be back at work in a couple of days.

"It's a good story and I'm worse off than Mick Fanning was," he joked.

Paramedics met the charter boat at Muriel Henchman Drive in Main Beach at 12.53pm, and treated Mr van Burck for lacerations to his calf.

He was taken to hospital in a stable condition and will recover there overnight.

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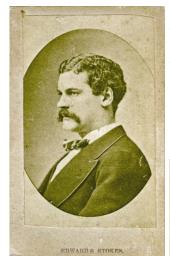
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A compendium of information, resources and discussion on notable nineteenth century American murders.

Saturday, July 16, 2016

Edward S. "Ned" Stokes.



This recently acquired *carte de visite* of playboy, Edward S. "Ned" Stokes, completes the set of principals in the 1872 murder of Jim Fisk, America's most flamboyant and best-loved robber-baron. Though hardly in the same class financially, Fisk and Stokes were great friends up until Stokes stole Fisk's mistress, Josie Mansfield, considered by some to be the most beautiful woman in the country. Not content to steal his girl, Stokes attempted to blackmail Fisk with his love letters to Josie. When that failed, Stokes sued Fisk for \$200,000 in profits he felt he was owed from a business venture. This failed as well. Frustrated at losing the lawsuit, Stoke ambushed Fisk on the stairs of the Grand Central Hotel in New York City and shot him dead.





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A Community for Curious Minds who love History, its Odd Stories, and Good Reads

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Ancient Egyptians Collected Fossils

By Adrienne Mayor (regular contributor)

Ancient Egyptian worshippers of Set, god of darkness and chaos, collected fossils of extinct beasts by the thousands. From 1300 and 1200 BC, nearly three tons of heavy, black fossils, polished by river sands, were brought to Set shrines on the Nile. Many of the bones were wrapped in linen and placed in rock-cut tombs.



The immense troves of fossils heaped at Qau el-Kebir and Matmar were discovered in 1922-24 by archaeologists Guy Brunton and Sir Flinders Petrie, stunning evidence that Egyptians revered large stone bones as sacred relics of Set. The god was often associated with the hippopotamus, and many of the fossils belonged to hippos, but remains of extinct crocodiles, boars, horses, giant antelope, and buffalo were also found.

In 1926, geologist K. S. Sandford explored 500 miles around Qau but failed to locate the source of "this strange collection of animals," which appear to be of the Pliocene-Pleistocene era. Sandford commented, "We await the verdict of the paleontologist with the greatest interest." In 1927, Brunton wrote that the tons of fossils would be "the subject of a special memoir"; in 1930 he again promised a volume devoted to the fossils.

But that was the last word about the extraordinary black bones of Set. The fossils were forgotten by the scientific community.

In 1998, I contacted paleontologist Andrew Currant, Curator of Quaternary Mammals, Natural History Museum, London, to inquire whether there were any records of the fossils discovered by Brunton and Petrie. Currant learned that a large "undocumented collection" of fossils from Qau were stored in a warehouse in Wandsworth. They were still in the original crates that Brunton and Petrie had shipped from Egypt. As I pointed out in *The First Fossil Hunters* (Princeton, 2000), the fossils gathered by ancient Egyptians more than 3,000 years ago—languishing in unopened crates in South London since 1920s—surely deserved scientific study by paleontologists and Egyptologists.

My book also described some Qau fossils wrapped in linen located in 1999 by archaeologist David Reese—who also tried in vain to convince the National Museum to open their crates of fossils. Reese learned that a collection of ancient Egyptian textiles from the Petrie Museum had been de-acquisitioned by the Victoria and Albert Museum and then acquired by the Bolton Museum (Manchester). In response to our queries, Angela Thomas, senior keeper at the Bolton, realized that some very ancient linen items of peculiar bulk had been inadvertently included with the textiles from the V&A. Labels scrawled on the backs of envelopes in Petrie's handwriting confirmed that these bundles were some of the long-lost linen-wrapped fossil bones discovered at Qau in 1923.

Inspired by this intriguing report, Egyptologist Tom Hardwick and geologist David Craven at the Bolton opened an investigation to determine the identity of the bones in 2007. They introduced a "Bone Bundle Mystery" contest, with a prize for guessing what sort of fossil was inside one of the bundles. Unwrapping revealed the scaphoid (foot bone) of a giant, extinct antelope/wildebeest. (Curiously, the Bolton Museum has removed evidence of the contest and identification of the fossils from their website, despite renewed interest in the fossils in 2016.)

Seven years later, in 2014, another bundle at the Bolton was examined by X-ray CT scanning (http://www.ironfromthesky.org/?p=276&). In 2016, the Egypt Exploration Society awarded a grant (http://www.ironfromthesky.org/?p=393) to Pip Brewer (Natural History Museum, London) and Diane Johnson (Open University) to finally unlock the dusty old crates that Currant, Reese, and I had located 16 years ago.

At long last, it appears that modern scientific analysis will determine the origins, species, and dates of the mysterious black bones of Set gathered by ancient Egyptians.

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About the author: Adrienne Mayor is the author of The First Fossil Hunters: Dinosaurs, Mammoths, and Myths in Greek and Roman Times; Fossil Legends of the First Americans; and The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women across the Ancient World.
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Michelle Maskiell says September 5, 2016 at 12:42 pm
Hopefully Brewer and Johnson will acknowledge your role in locating the trove of fossils when they publish their findings.
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Adrienne Mayor says September 5, 2016 at 2:33 pm I have been in touch with Diane Johnson, who plans to cite my book "The First Fossil Hunters" when they publish their results. It is so gratifying that these important fossils are finally getting the scientific attention they deserve!
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2 of 2

'I willed him to wake up': epilepsy in art - and in life

Saturday 13 August 2016 theguardian.com

Edward Lear called epilepsy 'the Demon', Dostoevsky saw it as a vehicle for transcendence. Colin Grant tells the remarkable story of the condition that stole his brother's life



The master of San Severino's Release of a Woman from Possession by the Devil (15th century). Photograph: Scala, Florence Graham Greene recalled how epilepsy ranked alongside leprosy as the condition most feared by the public. Photograph: Tony McGrath for the Observer A different picture has been presented by the large number of famous people known to have been epileptic, including Neil Young. Photograph: Rich Fury/Invision/AP A different picture has been presented by the large number of famous people known to have been epileptic, including Neil Young. Photograph: Rich Fury/Invision/AP Emily Dickinson lived a domestic life but also an alternative, epileptic one. Photograph: A/AP Emily Dickinson lived a domestic life but also an alternative, epileptic one. Photograph: A/AP Van Gogh's Self-portrait with Bandaged Ear (1889). Photograph: Peter Barritt/Getty Images/SuperStock RM Colin Grant Colin Grant (left) with his brother, Christopher

In 1926, Graham Greene was summoned by his doctor to alert him to a serious condition that carried certain risks that he must "consider carefully before marriage". The diagnosis had already been given to his parents some months earlier, after Greene suffered a bout of fainting, but it had been agreed that the secret was best kept from their son; that he "ought not to be told what the matter is in any terms that included the word epilepsy".

Writing in his autobiography, *A Sort of Life*, Greene recalled that at that time epilepsy ranked alongside cancer and leprosy as the condition most feared by the British public. Even though his physician held out the hope that his epileptic episodes might be arrested by "good walks and Kepler's Malt Extract", the 22-year-old writer was devastated. He'd recently pledged himself to be married, but now he was being counselled about the risks of fatherhood as epilepsy could be inherited. The next day he found himself "standing on an underground platform ... trying to summon the will and courage to jump".

Ancient Romans believed that sex might prevent epilepsy, but other cultures before and after contended

that the opposite was true. In England the prevailing view of epilepsy and marriage had not much changed from when the Victorian physician Sir Edward Sieveking wrote in his study *On Epilepsy* in 1858, "The marital act itself may become an exciting cause of epilepsy, and as we know the hereditary influence of the disease is great, we ought not to counsel epileptics to marry."

Greene confided that in contemplating suicide, he was exhausted "by the thought of starting a completely different future" from the one he'd imagined for himself. Luckily, for some people with epilepsy, their seizures are finite: they come to an end without medical intervention. But although Greene would have no further fainting attacks, he had been given a significant jolt.

In Britain up until 1970, a marriage could be annulled if "either party was, at the time of marriage, of unsound mind, mentally defective or subject to recurrent fits of insanity or epilepsy". That law was repealed in Britain in 1971, and the year earlier in Finland, but comparable legislation was still being enforced around the globe.

Epilepsy is considered by the courts of numerous countries including Kenya, Jamaica and Nigeria to be grounds for a decree of nullity of marriage. And it is still the subject of legal challenges in many parts of the world, most notably India. Under the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, a wedding could only



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be solemnised "if at the time of marriage neither party suffers from recurrent attacks of insanity or epilepsy". Though this proviso was amended in 1999 so that the words "or epilepsy" were omitted, plaintiffs regularly petition the courts for divorce on matrimonial grounds of "unsoundness of mind" or "epileptic insanity".

Epilepsy has been wedded to numerous epithets, such as "degenerate", "lunatic" and "feeble-minded". When Prince John, the son of George V, developed epilepsy, he was taken away to Sandringham and never mentioned again.

Until 1970, a marriage could be annulled in Britain

Stung by the stigma, unsurprisingly, people with epilepsy but also an alternative, epileptic one. Photograph: A/AP did not disclose that they suffered from the condition. The 19th-century writer and illustrator Edward Lear kept a diary for all of his adult life. He was fastidious, rarely going a day without making an entry. The diaries are frank. He even made a note of his bowel movements. Yet there is one aspect of his life that was never

recorded. Looking through the diaries you occasionally come across an entry that includes the letter "X". These were the days on which Lear had epileptic seizures.

Occasionally he referred to his condition as "the Demon" and, looking back over his life, Lear accepted phlegmatically that the Demon's constant presence from a young age "would have prevented happiness under any sort of circumstances. It is a most merciful blessing that I have kept up as I have, and have not gone utterly to the bad mad sad."

Lear had had his first attack as a five-year-old child, but no one outside his family knew of his condition or the shame he felt about it. His reticence would have been appreciated by the poet Emily Dickinson, who was ill for much of her 55 years. The sparse medical notes do not lead to a definitive diagnosis, but a close analysis of her work suggests to biographers such as Lyndall Gordon that the "It" at the centre of a number of Dickinson's poems is epilepsy. Further clues to the "loaded gun" perpetually aimed at the poet and the internal volcanic explosions that threatened to disrupt her life are offered by lines such as "I felt a cleaving in my mind – / As if my Brain had split –".

If the "It" is both deficit and credit then that's because though the paroxysms constrained her, and led to her exile from society as a hermitic recluse in Amherst, they were also the source material of alchemical poetic experiments. But why the secrecy? For many years after her death (and before) the narrative that explained Dickinson's seclusion was that she was a quaint young woman disappointed in love who sought refuge from that humiliation in her father's house. But the imagery in many of her poems, the repeated anxiety expressed over a loss of decorum and control, together with the pharmacological records of the prescriptions for her unnamed illness, present a compelling case that the seclusion was a consequence of the stigma Dickinson would have felt over her epilepsy; the shame of it and the fear of public humiliation propelled her from social gatherings up to the safety of her room. In 19th-century America's polite society, epilepsy was associated with syphilis, insanity and masturbation.



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Dickinson lived a domestic life but also an alternative, epileptic one. The duality she expresses in her writing is often shared by others who have the condition. Again and again she teases at that which cannot be written; she can only go so far in revealing how the reclusive suffering might ultimately lead to an exalted existence. In her visionary poetry, Dickinson comes close to showing but not telling of that other life located in epilepsy: "And yet – Existence – some way back – / Stopped –struck – my ticking – through."

Her poems find echoes in the work of the contemporary writer Lauren Slater, whose book, *Lying: A Metaphorical Memoir* (2000), is an account of her epilepsy. But then again it isn't. For Slater is playing a sly game, having her cake and eating it, by suggesting early on in this metanon-fiction book that the truth, as well as the narrator, is unreliable. *Lying* may all be made up.

Slater performs an impressive sleight of hand: she hides her epilepsy by revealing it, frankly – sort of. Any Jamaican, even if unfamiliar with postmodernist theory, would see straight away what she is doing. Jamaicans

are schooled in the art of obfuscation. They call it "playing fool to catch wise". Does Slater have epilepsy? What better revenge over your illness than to describe it and yet leave people wondering whether you were telling the truth. I would later recognise this quality in my brother Christopher, in his slippery and at times exasperating approach to his condition.

The first time that, as a teenager, Christopher failed to emerge from the bathroom and we had to break down the door to free him, we dismissed the fainting incident as bizarre but amusing. By the third occasion, following a battery of tests including a fitful night at a sleep deprivation clinic, I began to harbour the alarming suspicion that the fainting episodes were really epileptic seizures. I was a medical student at the time, and as reticent as my brother about entertaining such an unwanted diagnosis.



Graham Greene recalled how epilepsy ranked alongside leprosy as the condition most feared by the public. Photograph: Tony McGrath for the Observer A different picture has been presented by the large number of famous people known to have been epileptic, including Neil Young. Photograph: Rich Fury/Invision/AP A different picture has been presented

For as long as I could remember I'd been charged with watching over him. Christopher occupied a unique position in our family. He was the youngest, the most exuberant and happy. He seemed a blessed being who gladdened the heart of even the most miserable. It was as if, miraculously, his card had not been marked. At home in Luton, our tyrannical father Bageye always threatened to explode, but in the presence of Christopher he was disarmed.

After separating from Bageye, our mother had brought up seven children on her own. She'd been constantly on the move: rushing to the town hall to pay the rent; taking on overtime at Vauxhall Motors; popping over to the

by the large number of famous people known to have been epileptic, including Neil Young. Photograph: Rich Fury/Invision/AP Emily Dickinson lived a domestic life Emily Dickinson lived a domestic life but also an alternative, epileptic one. Photograph: A/AP Van Gogh's Self-portrait with Bandaged Ear (1889). Colin Grant Colin Grant (left) with his brother, Christopher

neighbours to borrow just enough to ward off the bailiffs. And in the meantime, could I keep an eye on my baby but also an alternative, epileptic one. Photograph: A/AP brother? It wasn't too much to ask, surely. But it was a role I hadn't been able to sustain as a student at the Royal London Hospital; and Christopher's recent fainting Photograph: Peter Barritt/Getty Images/SuperStock RM episodes had taken her back to her decades-old daily anxiety.

For much of history only one form of seizure, the graphic grand mal, was ever recognised. But in the last century, scientists have been able to finesse the broad brushstrokes of our ancestors' descriptions of epilepsy to discern numerous forms. Epilepsy, then, is an umbrella term under which many seizures fall. Still, there are two main categories: generalised seizures, in both hemispheres of the brain, for which there is no known cause (though inheritance is considered a factor in many cases); and focal or partial seizures, which arise in a particular damaged or sensitised part of the brain as a result of congenital disease or trauma, such as a blow to the head.

The story of epilepsy is a remarkable one. If it is a shameful, brutal and bruising tale it's also one of redemption. People with the condition have resisted and survived purges and pathological attempts to eradicate them as if they were defective carriers of a contagious disease. Throughout history their castration has been proposed to rid humanity of their affliction. In the 1930s and 40s under the Nazi eugenics programme, the forced sterilisation of epileptics reached its apogee. But a different picture has also been presented by the large number of famous people known or suspected to have been epileptic. They include Julius Caesar, Joan of Arc, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Vincent Van Gogh, Harriet Tubman, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and Neil Young.

None of this reassured Christopher. He refused to wear the recommended metal bangle engraved with the word "Epilepsy", which he dismissed as reductive, branding him an epileptic. If he had a seizure in the street and was brought to a hospital's emergency unit, he would never own up to the condition. The first time it happened, I was eventually summoned by the hospital. I arrived spitting feathers, angry and frustrated with him over what appeared to be a cavalier approach to his health and well-being. But on the walk back from the hospital Christopher described his seizure or the accident as a "fall from grace" - and a very public shaming from which, in his own way, through playing fool to catch wise, he sought and found protection.

On the few occasions that Christopher would consent to a frank conversation about his condition, I would invoke the names of these great figures who, in spite of their epilepsy, had led rich and rewarding lives. The response was always the same. "Van Gogh and Caesar!" Christopher would laugh sarcastically. "And how did it work out for them?"

Julius Caesar suffered at least four recorded episodes of epileptic seizures. They all came in the last two years of his life when he was in his 50s. The late onset was atypical. Epilepsy was more commonly believed to be a disease of childhood and puberty because it appeared to cease after marriage.

For centuries, physicians have wrangled over the likely cause of Caesar's epilepsy. Sex was proposed as a cure yet it was also believed to be associated with epilepsy as an after-effect of syphilis. One of the more colourful theories about Caesar's epilepsy was that it was a price of his womanising. But the most compelling aetiology centres on his hereditary predisposition, based on an above-average incidence of the condition in the Julio-Claudian families. Historians have

speculated that the sudden unexpected deaths of his father and great-grandfather were caused by epilepsy. Caesar's descendants Caligula and Claudius were also said to have had it.

As for Van Gogh, there are numerous explanations for his bizarre behaviour, which culminated in him cutting off part of his ear before his eventual suicide in 1890. Yet his epilepsy appears to be spelt out in his correspondence with his brother Theo, and the neurologist Fabienne Picard is among those who think that the publication of the letters "makes the diagnosis of epilepsy indisputable". The transcript of the doctor's notes on Van Gogh's admission to the St Remy psychiatric hospital on 9 May 1889 records that the artist had "suffered an attack of acute mania with visual and auditory hallucinations that led him to mutilate himself by cutting off his ear. Based on all the above, I consider that Mr Van Gogh is subject to attacks of epilepsy, separated by long intervals."

Lengthy but lucid letters from Vincent to his brother came thick and fast in the late 1880s – a period in which he also produced hundreds of paintings and drawings. The letters chart how precarious and unpredictable life could be for someone enduring epilepsy, and its impact on their mental health. A few months later, on 5 October, Van Gogh appeared particularly anxious about the consequences of having any subsequent fit in public. He wrote to his brother that he was keen to become acquainted with the doctor in the next town to which he intended to travel, "so that in the event of a crisis, one doesn't fall into the hands of the police and isn't forcibly carried off into any asylum".



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The eminent behavioural neurologist VS Ramachandran believes that Van Gogh's epilepsy may have given him an advantage. In his reflections in "The Science of Art", Ramachandran proposes a theory:

Van Gogh's epileptic seizures in his temporal lobes may have actually strengthened neural connections between his visual object and face area and the amygdala, nucleus accumbens and other brain regions involved in gauging the emotional significance of what's being viewed. Such a heightened attention and emotional response to visual images may have made him a more accomplished artist – his seizures enabling him to "attend" to certain critical dimensions more than you or I.

It is impossible to accurately trace the line between Van Gogh's art and his mental condition. But it is indisputable that his final fecund years were a riot of fevered output both in his writing and his art. Hundreds of letters, more than a thousand drawings and almost as many paintings survive. His artist's incontinence was a mark of his

urgency to get down what he wanted to express. Epilepsy accelerated the process.

In his novel *The Idiot*, Dostoevsky's protagonist Prince Myshkin's debilitating epileptic seizures are occasionally compensated for by a moment of lucidity that precedes an attack. In his writing, Dostoevsky, who had been epileptic since childhood, began to perceive the possibility that his

illness, indeed all illness, was a vehicle for transcendence: "As soon as he falls ill, as soon as the normal healthy state of the organism is disturbed, the possibility of another world begins to appear," wrote the novelist, "and as the illness increases, so do the contacts with the other world."

I would look forward to the magical moment when Chris was roused from his slumber after an attack

In the last decade, researchers in Australia have investigated the links between epilepsy and creativity. More than 60 artists with epilepsy volunteered in the University of Melbourne study "Sparks of Creativity" to investigate the hypothesis that "temporolimbic epilepsy ... leads to altered functioning and hyperstimulation of areas of the brain that control the functions that most influence the creative process".

The lead researcher is the artist Jim Chambliss, who was knocked unconscious in a car accident in 1986 and subsequently developed epilepsy. Chambliss's thesis rests on the concept of "intrinsic perceptions" (spontaneously and independently derived from the brain in simple or complex hallucinations). Intrinsic perceptions occur, he believes, when sensory experience in people with focal epilepsy "is so altered by the neurological processes impacted by the misfiring of electrical impulses that what would be commonly perceived or understood as 'real' takes on surreal or dreamlikequalities".



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They ended up creating art, says Chambliss, "that is dreamlike, surreal or extraordinarily imaginative". The study's findings (which are themselves extraordinary) have not been reproduced elsewhere. Another recent paper on epilepsy and art concluded that if there was a common theme among its surveyed artists it was of the "unwanted psychological harm of some seizures provoking dark, frustrated imagery".

There was always a moment as the phone rang in the early hours of the morning when my heart was flooded with dread. It could only mean one thing: Christopher had had another fit. The attacks were still random but their effect on him seemed incrementally deleterious; the cuts and gashes deeper and the bruises longer lasting.

On 4 August 2008, the phone rang at about 5am. But even after years of expectancy, of living on the threshold of amber alert, there was always a possibility of a false alarm. I took a deep diver's breath and answered. It was my sister Sonia on the line. Christopher was at her flat, five minutes from where I lived. He was unwell. Could I come over?

When I got there, he lay dying on the kitchen floor. His giant frame filled the room. Either side of him two paramedics worked at massaging his heart back to life.

A third man in a green jump suit, who was already packing away some Photograph: A/AP Emily Dickinson lived a domestic life but also an alternative, epileptic one.

Photograph: A/AP Van Gogh's Self
A third man in a green jump suit, who was already packing away some of the equipment, addressed me in a hushed conspiratorial voice.

"Your brother's been under 15 minutes now. There's not much more we can do. After 15 minutes ... It's always upsetting for the team. But I

portrait with Bandaged Ear (1889). Photograph: Peter Barritt/Getty Images/SuperStock RM Colin Grant "I'd like to try," I said. "I know how." Christopher

think we're going to have to stop. OK?"

The paramedics moved out of the way and I knelt beside my brother and tried to depress his chest. There was no "give" in his torso. It seemed almost wooden. I was grateful that his eyes were already closed.

I had often pondered the connection between sleep and epilepsy. In his treatise On Sleep and Waking, reflecting on the relationship between the two, Aristotle drew the parallel: "Sleep is like epilepsy, and, in a sense, actually is a seizure of this sort. Accordingly, the beginning of this malady takes place with many during sleep, and their subsequent habitual seizures occur in sleep, not in waking hours."

Observing Christopher in the throes of an epileptic seizure was disturbing and distressing. But in the mini drama of the fit, there was always one thing that I looked forward to: the magical moment when he was roused from his slumber after the attack. Watching over my brother in the aftermath I would implore him, as I did now, to wake up, to just awake. This time, he didn't.

• A Smell of Burning: The Story of Epilepsy by Colin Grant is published by Jonathan Cape on 25 August at £16.99.

comments

 damientrollope 1h ago

I have lost quite a few jobs because of it, was ridiculed at school, called stupid by elders....etc..etc.

Before my treatment started it was difficult to concentrate, difficult to be aware of what was going on around me, I had constant fatigue, and bewilderment.

I played sports at school, or tried to, I remember playing cricket and being a batsman and sometimes being unaware that i was being bowled at. I used to just stand there and not move, not knowing that the ball had gone past me. As you would expect, i never made many runs, and those i did make was by sheer fluke.

All these symptoms and maladies followed me into adult life.

I got turned down from so many employers because they didn't want to 'take any risks', and i completely understand this.

In the end i just lied about having 'it'

Then I finally got diagnosed and treatment followed, although it took years to find the right one. My life changed completely, it was like my eyes became open for the first time, I knew what was happening around me, i could do things which until then were not possible.

The simplest thing of these was going shopping on my own, before then, crowded places would more than likely trigger a fit.

There is still a stigma surrounding epilepsy, largely because it is not discussed or seen as a serious condition.

It is a condition, not an illness, as too many people seem to think.

1h ago

"He seemed a blessed being who gladdened the heart of even the most miserable."

resurgence275h ago

This was a magnificent piece about an under-reported illness still carting around stigma. And the stigma will never go away if people with epilepsy and their caregivers don't have the courage to own it, call it by its name, and educate others about it and their experience of it. My wife is epileptic, as are a couple of my friends, the wife of another friend, etc. I'm greatly looking forward to reading your book. And I take this opportunity to recommend Ray Robinson's novel Electricity and David B's memoir Epileptic.

tomcasagranda12h ago

I'm epileptic. I don't refer to it as epilepsy, whenever I have a seizure, but rather as Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On, with apologies to Jerry Lee Lewis. The one thing that bothers me are the precursors to the seizures; the myoclonic jerks.

However, epilepsy hasn't stopped me obtaining a first in Classics, a Masters in the reception of the Ancient World, and working in a job that fuels creativity, and research, as a compliance business risk analyst. Epilim, the pills I take, do have a problem with weight gain, but if sex can cure, or minimise epilepsy, I'm up for that.

As a Classics scholar, I was always of the opinion that Caligula was brain damaged after a faulty aphrodisiac, and that Claudius suffered from cerebral palsy. However, bearing in mind, and I refer to Suetonius who was writing some time after the event, Claudius forgot that he signed Messalina's execution warrant, he may have had a petit mal seizure.

Treflesg12h ago

Epilepsy, alongside other less celebrity medical problems, does not get the media coverage or politicians competing to announce more money for drugs to treat it at elections. There is a cancer drugs fund but no epilepsy or MS drugs fund and so on.

Treflesg12h ago

Epilepsy is such a hidden issue, lots of people have it, but, it is not publisiced like other things are, it is hidden and coped with, if you are lucky enough to respond to treatment.

Treflesg12h ago

Schools are much better now, they used to send epileptic students home after each fit seriously disrupting their education, now most are more inclusive and make it work.

Mightymaybe Treflesg11h ago

How do they make it work, when a student has just had a grand mal?

Karijn Aussems15h ago

Here are some links to the cases in Kenya where women with epilepsy are raped, in some cases as 'first aid':

http://contraindications5.rssing.com/chan-4026359/all p279.html

'The patients peeped through the window where they watched in disbelief as the two men repeatedly raped the girl in turns under a tree behind the wards. The exercise made her recover from convulsion and the two covered her mouth with a piece of clothe to prevent her from raising an alarm as they were not done with the business.'

Here you see another newspaper reporting the same case: http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2013/07/22/guards-rape-patient-in-nandi-hospital_c805536

Other cases:

http://www.jambonewspot.com/kenyan-men-preying-women-epilepsy-attacks-raping/

http://www.nation.co.ke/counties/Epileptic-girl-raped-and-dumped-in-ditch-/-/1107872/2155090/-/13w5jutz/-/index.html

http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2015/09/16/homa-bay-cops-probe-rape-of-epileptic-girl-14 c1205603

Karijn Aussems15h ago

Look forward to reading your book Colin Grant. Interesting part: 'Ancient Romans believed that sex might prevent epilepsy'. I work for youth with epilepsy in Kenya. And here, there are still some people who believe that the first aid for seizures is sex, like in Kapsabet and Taita. Women wouldn't be allowed to ask for sex, and therefore express it through a seizure. Unfortunately, in some cases, women are therefore raped when they have a seizure. A journalist even wrote in the paper that the seizure of a girl who was raped by the guards of the Kapsabet hospital (!) stopped BECAUSE OF the ordeal! This shows there's still much to be done to make sure people with epilepsy are given the right support to live well with the condition. I already ordered your book online, look forward to receiving it the end of this month!

oenonejones17h ago

Slightly gloomy examples given here - which have my sympathy, but lots of people live (fairly) normal lives with epilepsy. I'm not saying its not a struggle but not everyone dies/ commits suicide.

NuitsdeYoung oenonejones17h ago

Yeah, we know that. I've had friends who had it and it wasn't something one was ever aware of. But that doesn't help when you do lose someone.

mfduran oenonejones16h ago

Yes, many do live "normal" lives - I am guessing it depends on the severity or the kind of epilepsy they have. Many don't, however, and it is rarely talked about. Without these voices there will be no research, no progress towards a cure. Which is why I posted my "gloomy" account below.

17h ago

On October 11th 2007 my son Leon, 30 years old at the time, took his own life after a heartbreaking struggle with epilepsy that had degenerated into -or was caused by-Hashimoto's encephalopathy. Over the many years in which he could barely leave the hospital's neurological/psychiatric wing, I admired his resilience, his generosity, his humanity and his compassion while literally living what can only be described as hell on earth: recurrent and terrifying psychotic episodes during which he was totally conscious that he was, at that moment, insane. "Mom, are you seeing the man walking besides me right now?" "There is no one besides you, it is just us" "so, that is a hallucination?" "Yes it is" "he is threatening me, he has a knife, he says he will cut my throat and yours if I tell you about him" "that is a paranoid hallucination, my love, keep talking to me, tell me about the book I bought you" "I can't, I am terrified" "let me talk to him, I will make him go away" "how will you do that if you cannot see him?" "I can see him in my mind, I will talk to him in my mind, listen to me in your mind: I am telling him go, go, you don't exist. Leave us alone. Can you hear me? Is he still there?" Sometimes it worked. Sometimes we established a three-way conversation of which I was the interpreter that lasted for hours. Sometimes it did not work.

My son left a sizeable amount of writings in which he explained what was happening in his periods of sanity, others in which he wrote down his delusions from within them. And many beautiful pencil or ink drawings with which he illustrated them.

This is the first time I write about it or him, and it is still excruciating. If I ever have the strength, I would want to edit and publish them: they may help others, sufferers and doctors alike. Thank you for prompting me to write this down.

tehomet mfduran14h ago

I'm so sorry for your loss.

NuitsdeYoung mfduran12h ago

My sympathies.

LittleRichardjohn18h ago

Looking for causal relationships between epilepsy and creativity is a mug's game. Any creativity is the caused by the attitude that today could be your last, not from visions and voices.

The traditional grand-mal epileptic is a natural hedonist. At least until Epilim came along.

MightymaybeLittleRichardjohn11h ago

What a load of tosh!

franciscat18h ago

Very good read. Thanks.

modramom19h ago

Thank you for a moving story, I often feel epilepsy is not talked about as much as it should be.

NuitsdeYoung 21h ago

Thank you for a moving account. It's 3 years now since a much-loved cousin took his own life after a long struggle with epilepsy and bi-polar (could not take medication for the latter because it interfered with the epilepsy medication). His parents, sibling, ex and child are still hurting.

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King, magician, general ... slave: Eunus and the First Servile War against Rome

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https://mikedashhistory.com/2016/07/16/king-magician-general-slave-eunus-and-the-first-servile-war-against-rome/

A Blast From The Past

by Mike Dash

16 July 201628 August 2016/ allkindsofhistory



Buried in chains – a Roman-era skeleton, thought to be that of a male slave, excavated near Bordeaux. The body was buried with shackles around the neck, and dates from the 1st century AD.

The omens had been terrible that year. In Rome, a slave girl gave birth to a monster: "a boy with four feet, four hands, four eyes, double the usual number of ears, and two sets of sexual organs," most likely a case of Siamese twins. In Sicily, Mount Etna erupted "in flashes of fire," spewing gouts of molten rock and scorching ash that torched rich landowners' property for miles around.

It all pointed to trouble – to trouble in Sicily, and most of all to trouble

with the slaves. And when that trouble came, it made sense of the portents, for it was the work of a slave who was in Roman eyes a monster. He was a magician who belched flames like the volcano, an adept who foretold futures, and a messianic priest-king who served a grotesque foreign goddess, and led his people in a revolt that lasted half a decade, and took five large Roman armies to put down.



A statue of Eunus outside the walls of the citadel at Enna, in the interior of

74 A.D.His name was Eunus – which may be translated, roughly, as "the kindly one" – and although he is practically forgotten now, he was a leader fit to rank alongside Spartacus – or, in truth, above him, for while both men were slaves who masterminded wars against Rome (Spartacus six decades later), Eunus's rebellion was four or five times as large, and it lasted something like three times as long. He built a state, which Spartacus never tried to do, and all the evidence suggests that he inspired fierce loyalty in ways the Thracian gladiator could not – after all, Spartacus (to the surprise of those who know him from romantic film and television portrayals) was undone as much by dissension within the ranks of his own army as he was by the might of the legions that were sent against him. And when the end came for Eunus, it did so in a *götterdämmerung* reminiscent of nothing so much as the fall of Masada, the Jewish mountain-top fortress taken by

was once his ancient capital.

Sicily. The formidable hill-top fortress Rome around 74 A.D. At Masada, the 960 surviving defenders committed suicide en masse rather than fall into the hands of their

enemies. In Sicily, the thousand picked men of the slave-king's bodyguard hacked their way out of encirclement, only to kill one another in an identical pact when their position became hopeless leaving their leader and his last four followers to be hunted down in the furthest reaches of the mountains that had protected them for years.

We first meet Eunus in 135 B.C. – or perhaps in 138; our sources are not precise, and we know only that the rising that he led began some 60 years after the peace that Rome imposed on Carthage at the end of the Second Punic War (218-201 B.C.) He was then the household slave of a man named Antigenes, a rich Roman who lived in the Sicilian interior; but he had been born a free man, and had been captured and brought to the island some years earlier, most likely by the Cilician pirates who ran a flourishing slave trade in the eastern Mediterranean. We know little about Eunus as a person, but the fragmentary accounts of his rebellion make it clear that he was unusually intelligent, and must have been highly charismatic. He had a reputation as a prophet, delivering predictions of the future in a trance state, and he was especially noted for something that the chroniclers who told his story present as a piece of parlour magic, but which – reading between the lines – we can reconstruct as something more impressive and portentous. He breathed out sparks and fire as he spoke, "as from a burning lamp" – an effect that he supposedly produced by concealing a hollow nut-shell with holes drilled in it in his mouth, and filling it with "sulphur and with fire."



Household slaves serving wine in ancient Rome, from a 2nd century A.D. mosaic found in Tunisia. They wear clothing typical of the men present." When Eunus smilingly of the period, and lucky charms in the form of amulets.

However Eunus produced his effects, and whether or not he truly believed himself to be divinely appointed and inspired, he was plainly an arresting character, and Antigenes used to enjoy wheeling him out at dinner parties to amuse his guests. In the course of these events, we're told, Eunus frequently assured the assembled Romans that he was destined to be a king one day, and painted word-pictures of the ideal state that he would rule. According to the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus, Antigenes was so "taken by his hocus-pocus" that he would "cross-question him about his kingship, and how he would treat each assured the masters that he would behave with

moderation, the guests

"were always stirred to laughter, and some of them, picking up a nice tidbit from the table, would present it to him, adding, as they did so, that when he became king, he should remember the favour."

The punchline of this story, naturally, is that Eunus's prediction did come true; he did become a king, and he did come to hold the power of life and death over the Romans whom he had once entertained at the dinner table. And while the vengeance that he wrought against the slave-owning class in Sicily was truly terrible, he did remember the smirking kindness of the men who had once gifted him with bits of meat. They were permitted to live, and tell the tale of the slave who had risen to such heights.

The circumstances that brought Eunus to power had their roots in the history of the preceding decade. The chroniclers who wrote about his rebellion present it as something that came as an absolute surprise to the Roman citizens of Sicily, but while it seems plausible enough that a complacent group of farmers failed to spot the early signs of trouble brewing, they probably were there for those who looked for them. We know that there had been a sharp rise in the number of slaves sold in the province, as the island was turned into a bread-basket capable of feeding Rome's fast-growing republic; wheat cultivation was highly labour-intensive, and it fuelled an insatiable demand for more and more captive workers. We know that there was a large community of Greek-speakers on the island, who could remember times when it had been more than a mere appanage of a greater state – and that there may have been as many as 200,000 slaves in Sicily in all, living on an island with a total population of no more than 600,000. We know that the conditions that most of these slaves endured were frequently atrocious; they were branded, shackled, whipped, sent out to work the fields in chain-gangs, and kept confined in their hundreds in subterranean barrack-cells known as ergastula. And we know there was resistance. Some time in the late 140s, five or six years before the rebellion began, a one-time governor of Sicily set up a stone on the mainland, a commemorative inscription in which he boasted of rounding up 917 captives who had escaped to the mainland, and of returning them to their masters. Peter Green suggests that rebellion may have been in the air for at least two or three years before it actually occurred, and that slaves in several different parts of the island probably conspired to bring it about.

VIAMFECEIA BREGIO AD CAPVAMET IN EAVIA PONTEIS OMNEIS MILIARIOS TABELARIOSQVE:POSEIVEI HINCE:SVNI NOVCERIA MMEILIA-LI CAPVAMIXXCIII MVRANVAN-LXXIIII-COSENTIAM-CXXIII VALENTIAM:CTXXX AD FRETVMAD STATVAM·CCXXXI · REGIVM·CCXXXVIII SVMA:AF:CAPVA:REGIVM:MEILIA:CCC ETEIDEM PRAE TORIN SICILIA-FVGITEIVOS-ITALICORVM CONQVAEISIVEI-REDIDEIQVE HOMINES DCCCCXVII. EIDEMOVE PRIMVS-FECEI-VT-DE-AGRO-POPLICO ARATORIBYS CEDERENT PAASTORES FORVMAEDISQUE POPLICAS HEIGFECE

The ''Polla elogium," an inscription found in Basilicata in the central Appennines which dates to the 2nd century B.C. The stone records the deeds of a Roman consul, including the rounding up of 917 runaway slaves who had crossed to the mainland from Sicily – a statement read by several scholars as evidence that the island was haunted by unrest in the years leading up to the outbreak of the First Servile

In some respects, the slaves of Sicily seemed poor material for a rebellion. They were divided by language and culture – we read that some came to the island from Spain, others from Greece and Macedonia, others again from Syria and the coast of Anatolia. Most worked in the open in the boiling summer sun, while the lucky few lived, like Eunus, as servants in Roman households, where for the most part they enjoyed privileges that we can reasonably assume made them objects of envy and hatred to their less fortunate brethren in the fields. There was a third group, too - more fearsome than the other two combined, and destined to provide Eunus with his most effective troops. These were the herdsmen of the mountainsides, slaves set to watch over their masters' cattle and sheep. By virtue of the duties they performed, these men were armed with clubs, spears and "imposing herdsmen's staffs," controlled packs of half-wild dogs that were nurtured on a diet of raw meat, and were more or less encouraged into lives that incorporated acts of brigandage and murder. This was because, in order to save money, some Roman masters withheld even the basics of food and clothing from their herdsmen, telling them to steal

what they needed from neighbouring farms and passing travellers instead. Such men soon formed what amounted to paramilitary groups, infesting the interior like "scattered bands of soldiers," and, as they became increasingly experienced, they were "filled with arrogance and daring." Away from the safety of the coastal towns, it seems, the Sicily of the second century B.C. was a lethally dangerous place for a stranger to be. We are told that the whole island was "full of murder," and this was probably considered normal; writing more than half a century later, the Roman orator Cicero could still speak of going to "the wild hill-country of Lucania [in the boot of Italy] ... where ... we find

cattle-barons with their hired hands – armed slaves, that is, raiding and plundering one another's herds and homesteads."

In such a dangerous environment, one spark could turn into a brush-fire with terrifying rapidity, and the chroniclers agree that in the Sicily of the 130s B.C. that spark was provided by a slave-owner by the name of Damophilus. "A man of great wealth, but insolent in manner," he lived in Enna, deep in the interior, and had a wife, Megallis, who "vied even with her husband in punishing the slaves and in her general inhumanity to them." The names suggest this pair were part of the large colony of Sicilian Greeks, centred on the great city of Syracuse, that dominated the east coast of the island and claimed descent from immigrants who had once contended with Rome for control of the whole island. They were, it seems, unusually brutal to their slaves, even by the standards of the day. They beat their men "beyond all reason," and scourgings were regular affairs. "There was not a day on which Damophilus did not punish some of his slaves," so Diodorus tells us, "and never for any just cause."



Sicily at the time of the First Servile War (from Donaldson). Place names mentioned in the text are underlined in orange. Click to view in higher resolution.

Damophilus is painted as the villain of the piece in all surviving accounts of the rising. Not only did he travel the countryside "in a coach drawn by stately horses, and guarded by a company of armed slaves," he also "carried about with him many beautiful boys, flatterers and parasites." He was arrogant, "surpassed the luxury of the Persians," and he was also uncouth, having been brought up "without learning, or any liberal education." In short, Damophilus and Megallis were asking for trouble. In Eunus and his men, they found it.



Lucius Annaeus Florus's
history of Rome contains an
epitome of now-lost lines from
Livy offering vital clues to the
character of Eunus.

Exactly what role Eunus himself played in the rising – the First Servile War, as it would eventually be known, Spartacus and his fellow gladiators featuring in the Third – remains a matter of dispute. Diodorus Siculus is explicit in stating that he was the shadowy figure behind the whole rebellion, which had been planned in advance, but most historians of the period prefer a much more straightforward narrative. In these accounts, the harsh treatment that Damophilus and his wife meted out drove their own slaves to such a pitch of desperation that they resolved to do away with them. This was a crime so terrible that it was punishable with crucifixion, and one pregnant with such grave consequences for the killers' souls that it required approval from the gods. So Damophilus's slaves sought out the one man in Enna who could offer that approval to them; they went to see Eunus the miracle-worker.

We learn a little more about the power that the slave-priest wielded from L. Annaeus Florus, whose chronicle incorporates an epitome of the lost 56th book of Livy's *History of Rome*. Livy paints Eunus as a "fanatic," and adds

that he "waved his dishevelled hair in honour of the Syrian goddess." From this we can deduce that

he must have been a devotee of Atargatis, the mother-goddess venerated by the people of his homeland, the Seleucid Empire – by this point a fast-declining Middle Eastern successor-state to the old Macedonian empire carved out by Alexander the Great. Atargatis is portrayed as half-woman, half-fish: a long-haired first mermaid, who was married to the sun-god, Hadad. But it was the behaviour of her acolytes that disgusted the Romans most, and if Eunus was a faithful follower of hers, it would explain not only his ability to command his fellow-slaves, but also some of the horror that his enemies felt for him. In Syria, the priests of Atargatis wore make-up, and they bit, whipped and cut themselves to induce religious ecstasies. Their initiation is luridly related by the Greek satirist Lucian, who describes how the goddess's followers emasculated themselves in order to serve her:

"The youth... throws off his clothes, rushes to the centre with a great shout, and takes up a sword which, I believe, has stood there for this purpose for many years. He grabs it and immediately castrates himself. Then he rushes through the city holding in his hand the parts he has cut off. He takes female clothing and women's adornment from whichever house he throws those parts into. This is what they do at the Castration."

We have no evidence that Eunus was himself a eunuch; indeed, it seems he had a wife, a woman who came from the same city that he did. What we do know is that he had priestly attributes. He was a prophet, claiming to have experienced visions of the Seleucid gods, who told him the future "from their own lips," and we know that at least some of the predictions that he made came true. That, combined with the fire-breathing and frenzies, would have been enough to impress a wide circle of potential followers, for while the chronicles of his life and times are sceptical, we know enough about the popular religion of the time to understand the influence it had. After all, it was generally accepted that the gods did act through ordinary men, and could work miracles when they chose to do so. Whether Eunus was a charismatic zealot, or – as the weight of evidence suggests to me – a much more canny figure who had found his own way to acquire power, matters relatively little. What is significant is that his standing in the slave community of Enna led the would-be assassins of Damophilus and his wife to seek him out.



The Seleucid mother-goddess, Atargatis.

They came, says Diodorus Siculus, to receive blessings. Eunus gave them. Four hundred slaves gathered in a field outside Enna's walls shortly before midnight, and there, "after making pledges to each other and exchanging vows by night over sacrificial victims, they armed themselves as far as the occasion permitted." By this, the chronicler implies that the rebels were very poorly armed; elsewhere we read that they were equipped mostly with staves, sickles and kitchen spits. But they were driven by a desperate resentment. "They put on the strongest of weapons," Diodorus says, meaning "their angry determination to wipe out their arrogant masters." Then, with Eunus at their head, belching flames in the darkness, the slaves stormed into the city.

It is likely, after 60 years of peace, that the gates of Enna were either open, or at least no more than weakly manned, and very probable that the garrison consisted of a barely-trained militia. In any event, the rising was a complete success. Other slaves within the city joined it, killing their own masters as part of what appears to have been a general massacre of the free inhabitants. The

rebels were implacable. "They did not spare even suckling children," we're assured, "but plucked them violently from their mothers' breasts and dashed them against the ground." Eunus himself killed both Antigenes and a former master of his named Pytho. His men slaughtered the other slaveowners of Enna, and the women were raped. Damophilus and Megallis were tracked down to a property that they owned outside the walls and while their young daughter was spared – she had always been kind to the slaves, we're told, even dressing their wounds when they were beaten they themselves dragged, alive, back to the city.

One question that arises at this point is how well-organised the rebels were, and whether they had any sort of strategy. Most of the handful of historians who have studied the Servile War believe that the rising was more or less spontaneous, and insist that its leaders lacked of any sort of ideology. In this view, Enna was merely a local affair that happened to gain traction thanks to Roman incompetence, and which spread across the island more or less haphazardly. The contrary opinion, which I find more plausible, is that there must have been at least a basic plan. One piece of evidence for this lies in the treatment of Damophilus, who might – given the general massacre that had already occurred - have expected little mercy from the rebels. What actually seems to have happened was that he was brought to Enna's amphitheatre, and there allowed some semblance of a trial.



This vista of modern Enna, perched high in the mountains of central Sicily, gives a good idea of the town's excellent defensive position. Eunus's capital was, says Diodorus Siculus, all but impregnable to ordinary siege tactics, and fell only as a result of betrayal.

was an attempt on Eunus's part to establish something resembling the rule of law, the idea rapidly backfired. Damophilus proved to be unexpectedly eloquent – one reason for doubting Diodorus's depiction of him as a loutish, uncouth man. He made a case for the fundamental justice of his treatment of his slaves, swaying many of the audience with his rhetoric, and it seemed for an instant that he might escape with his life. It took two of Eunus's disconcerted principal lieutenants, Hermeias and Zexius, to rush forward and summarily behead him. Megallis was then turned over to her female slaves, who thrashed her and hurled her to her death from a precipice.

There are at least two further indications that Eunus had planned the rising, and that he was a good deal more than simply its ad hoc leader, acclaimed at the last second before it actually began. One is that, amid the general massacre at Enna, the slaves were far-sighted and disciplined enough to identify and spare the city's blacksmiths and its armourers; these men were clapped in chains and then put back to work, forging iron swords and shields to supplement the makeshift weapons of the first stage of the rising. The other, still more convincing, is that we're told a second rebellion broke out almost immediately, in quite a different part of Sicily; less than a month after Enna fell, another slave, named Cleon, gathered several hundred men and seized the southern port

lf

of Akragas. Even more tellingly, he soon marched north – and though we're told the Romans dared to hope that the two slave armies would fall upon each other, they actually joined forces. The Cleon of the chronicles is a tough character who seems to have been one of the herdsmen-soldiers so despised by Cicero. He was certainly no stranger to violence (he had "committed murders all over the place," Diodorus assures us.) But he willingly swore fealty to Eunus, and was appointed generalissimo of the rebel armies in return. Green finds it hard to believe that this turn of events was not planned in advance; I suspect he may be right.



A gold coin showing a long-haired god or ruler, allegedly excavated near the rebel town of Morgantina. It has been suggested that it was struck by Eunus and shows him as King Antiochus; both Peter Morton and Keith Rutter, however, suggest it is a forgery.

It's worth pausing for a moment here to sketch a context for the rising. Slavery, to begin with, was an important part of Rome's economy. Slaves accounted for something like one in five of the total population – enough that when, in Nero's time, a proposal was made to issue all the captives then in Rome with uniforms, it was shouted down on the grounds that the slaves would realise how numerous they were. They came from a wide variety of backgrounds - a man might be enslaved after a military defeat, trafficked, as Eunus was, from lands beyond Rome's borders, rescued from the rubbish tips where Romans abandoned unwanted babies, or simply be born a slave. They were regarded as investments, akin to livestock, and practically every authority insists that slavery itself was so embedded in the warp and weft of Roman society that the slaves took it for granted. There are a few dissenting views – Theresa Urbainczyk thinks it ridiculous to suppose "that everyone in antiquity lacked imagination and could not conceive of a society without slaves." But there is

certainly no evidence that Eunus, in his four or five years in power, made efforts to abolish slavery, and the limit of his successor Spartacus's ambition was to make it home to Thrace as a free man himself. The most that it seems safe to say, thinks Green, is that even if the leaders of the rebellion "had nothing against slavery as an institution, [they] objected violently to be being enslaved themselves."

Slave risings, in consequence, were scarcely commonplace, but they were not unheard of. At least a dozen are known to have taken place between 501 and 135 B.C., five of them in Rome itself and two more in the southern parts of Italy. But none were as anything like as large or widespread as the Sicilian rebellion, and few seem to have lasted longer than a week or two. What made Eunus's rebellion truly dangerous was that it endured long enough to inspire other captives across the Mediterranean. According to a fragment written by the usually reliable Julius Obsequens in the 5th century A.D., Eunus's war prompted a vast conspiracy of thousands of slaves in Italy. A second chronicler, Orosius, notes that 450 slaves who rose at Minturnae, south of Rome, were crucified; a thousand more cast off their chains in the silver-mines of Athens, and 4,000 at Sinuessa, on the Appian Way (where their rebellion took two years to put down). Others again rose on Delos, a sacred island in the Aegean, where a rebellion remained in progress as late as 132 B.C. There was even a rising of 150 slaves in Rome.

What was it, though, about Eunus's rising that made it so much larger and more troublesome to the Republic than any other slave rebellion? Part of the answer to this question is that the Rome was badly stretched by a number of concurrent crises; the fall of Enna was followed not only by the insurgency on Delos but by the Numantine War in Spain – two emergencies that between them



The rump of the once-mighty Seleucid Empire in about 188 BC, is shown here (untinted, right, labelled "Syria") half a century before Eunus's revolt. The Cilician pirates who operated along its mediterranean coast had their bases at the foot of the Taurus Mountains.

must have absorbed a third or more of the Republic's military resources. Still more importantly, however, Eunus seems to have been an able commander. Having been elected king, and been acknowledged as such by popular acclaim, he quickly created a council of "such men as seemed to be gifted with superior intelligence," and even passed that crucial test of leadership, acting on the advice of a man who dared to openly challenge him. This was one Achaeus, a Greek who "excelled both at planning and in action," and who

drove home the unwelcome point that the fall of Enna marked the start, and not the end, of the rebellion. Seizure of a Roman city (Achaeus reminded his fellow slaves) – not to mention the murder of so many of her citizens – could not fail to bring retribution down upon the rebels. They needed to be ready for it.

Eunus now took two important decisions. Within a week of the initial rising, he had armed a force supposed to number 6,000 men, using axes, hatchets and slings as improvised equipment. He also contrived to feed his troops by raiding the estates around the city. The ranks of the slave army soon rose further: to 10,000, we are told, and then to 20,000. The numbers given in the chronicles should not, of course, be taken literally; they mean little more than that the slaves seemed very numerous. We can safely assume, nonetheless, that Eunus and Cleon must have had command of forces considerably in excess of 5,000 men. Not only did they handily defeat the Roman *praetor* – governor – of Sicily, the hapless Lucius Hypsaeus, when he moved against them with a levy of all the local Greeks and Romans he could scrape together; they went on to rout three other *praetors* in turn, each of whom would have commanded a legion. Since a Roman legion, at this time, numbered 5,000 battle-hardened men, it is reasonable to suppose that this string of victories would scarcely have been possible had the rebel army not outnumbered its enemies by two or three to one.



What Eunus was up against: a Roman legion of the 1st century

Eunus's second move was considerably more significant. He began to forge a kingdom of his own in the interior of Sicily. I am awkwardly aware that, in describing what he did in terms of state-building, I am setting myself at odds with several leading authorities on the Servile Wars, most notably with Keith Bradley, for whom almost everything that Eunus did is best understood as crude propaganda or a short-term manoeuvre for position. The evidence that we have, though, seems fairly conclusive. For Eunus to have had himself crowned king means little; plenty of ordinary megalomaniacs have done the same. To

claim kinship with the gods, and magical abilities, might be nothing more than a weak man's way of leveraging power. But to do as Eunus did, and proclaim that he would henceforth be known

as "Antiochus," suggests that his state was making significant new claims. That's because the name is generally agreed to have been chosen to invoke the memory of Antiochus the Great (222-187 B.C.), one of the most powerful of all the rulers of the Seleucid Empire.

Eunus, in this reading, was engaged in nothing less than an attempt to establish a Greek kingdom in the Roman west. Peter Morton, who has conducted a detailed survey of the coinage that survives from the period of his reign, sees in it symbolism that can be read as an attempt to identify the rebel state with what might be termed a form of Sicilian nationalism, and it's true that one of the most common symbols on the coins are sheaves of corn that link them to the local cult of Demeter – patron goddess of Eunus's capital at Enna. But Demeter was also the Greek equivalent of Atargatis, and the names of the new king's three leading advisors – Achaeus, Hermias and Zeuxis – also happen to be, surely not coincidentally, those of three of Alexander the Great's most trusted lieutenants. Green suspects that Eunus may actually have believed himself to be a member of the Seleucid royal line, and though it is simply not possible to know whether or not this was so, we can plausibly assume that he had picked up quite a lot about the workings of his home state in his days as a freeman in the east. We know that the slave-king had been born in Apamea, a city on the banks of the Orontes in what is today Syria – and Apamea was a crucial nexus of Seleucid power, being home to both a royal treasury and the royal stud. It seems highly significant, in this context, that one of Eunus's first proclamations was a declaration that all his followers should consider themselves "Syrians." By this he seems to have meant all were equal citizens of his new state, one that his own divine authority had given him the right to remake as he chose.

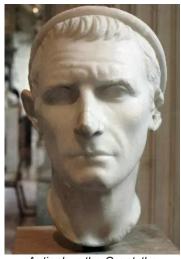


A poor-quality bronze coin issued in Sicily in or around Eunus's time. Peter Morton suggests that this, more than any other surviving piece of evidence, is likely to show the head of "King Antiochus" as he wished to be seen by his subjects.

At least four different types of bronze coinage have been linked to Eunus, and, collectively, their survival suggests that Bradley is wrong to dismiss the minting of currency as little more than a propaganda trick. Coins would surely have been required to grease the internal workings of a state that endured for at least two and more probably for four or more years, and which, at its height, may have controlled anywhere between one fifth and one half of Sicily. Certainly Eunus was able to keep large bodies of troops in the field, which has to imply that they were paid; he and Cleon soon took Tauromenium, a port midway along the eastern coastal road, along with Catina and Morgantina, an important supply centre in the interior that was also the home to one of the island's mints. They even laid siege unsuccessfully to the metropolis of Syracuse, remaining camped outside the walls for so long that their army was forced to eat fish, even though they were sacred to the mother-goddess. The failure of the siege tells us something of the limits of slave power, but it probably did not prevent Eunus from controlling the proverbially fertile triangle of

farmland around Leontini – an area productive enough to have sustained his armies and his state indefinitely. He and Cleon were also sufficiently confident to stage a remarkable show of defiance outside the walls of another of their targets; having stationed themselves safely out of range of any archers on the walls, the rebels put on a sort of play, depicting not only the gaining of their freedom, but also the violent retribution that they had taken against their former owners. It has been suggested that their aim was to give hope to the slaves within the city, and to strike fear into their masters.

Diodorus tells us that these achievements were made with scanty resources – "their pressing needs," he explains, "forced the rebel slaves to have a good opinion of everyone; they did not have the luxury of selecting only the stronger and better men." But this is to neglect another crucial aspect of the rebellion: the ability of the insurgents to find common cause with the low-born freemen of the island. The poor, we're told, flocked to the rebels' banners, substantially augmenting the forces available. These men seem to have been more angry, or perhaps simply less disciplined, than the slaves themselves, burning down estates and setting fire to some of the harvests that Eunus had prudently set aside to feed his men. According to Diodorus, moreover, while the slaves cut off the hands of their Roman prisoners, the native Sicilians cut off their whole arms. These accounts have encouraged several of the authorities on the insurgency – most notably Peter Morton – to suggest that it is best regarded not as a slave war at all, but at a general rising of Sicilians, desperate to throw off the invaders' yoke.



Antiochus the Great, the Seleucid emperor after whom Eunus named himself "King Antiochus." A bust in the Louvre.

However we choose to view Eunus's rebellion, we can certainly say that its first stages were the work of men whose aim was revenge, and whose chief motive was desperation. It seems reasonable to add that many of those involved were probably first-generation slaves, who knew of freedom and may have had a free man's familiarity with weapons – a situation intriguingly analogous to what happened in Haiti two millennia later when the only truly successful slave rebellion known to history took place. The Sicilian rising was held together by nationalism or religion – most likely by a potent combination of the two – and both Adam Donaldson and Peter Green detect explicitly "millenarian overtones" in the accounts that survive of it; Green goes so far as to argue that Jewish slaves present at the time of the rebellion could have supplied Eunus with a "ready-made apocalyptic ideology made for just such a struggle as this." Whether or not this was true, there is certainly no doubt that the rising was a large-scale challenge to the power of Rome – the largest that had risen within the borders of the republic to that date, and almost certainly the

largest, longest-lasting that ever would be.

Of course, the Romans did not stand idly by while all this happened. Much is missing from surviving versions of events, but we're told that there were "many great battles" between the insurgents and the Republic. As many as eight different Roman commanders seem to have taken the field – a suggestion that, in itself, argues that the First Servile War probably lasted for at least four years – and two *praetors*, Manlius and Lentilus, and even a consul, C. Fulvius Flaccus, were among those who attempted unsuccessfully to engage with Eunus's men. Each successive Roman force, we read, was "cut to pieces," and Florus's epitome of Livy notes that even the *praetors*' own camps were captured by the slaves – "the most disgraceful thing that can occur in war."

Making sense of these events means engaging more closely with the surviving sources, for the historiography of the ancient period is notoriously fraught. The *Library of History* composed by Diodorus Siculus, for instance – which has been quoted so frequently – is not contemporary (it dates to around a century after Eunus's revolt) and survives not as an original manuscript, but in two very late, incomplete and occasionally contradictory fragments that date to the Byzantine period: one compiled by Photius in the ninth century A.D., and the other on the orders of the Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, in the 10th. Insofar as we can grapple with Diodorus at all, it is by viewing him as an equivocal source; his history, written in Greek, has a moralising tone and is concerned to paint the post-Punic Wars Republic as decadent – a decadence that, the *Cambridge*

Ancient History points out, the historian thought had its origins in "the greed and lawlessness of the Romans of the provinces."

This suggests that the *Library of History* may contain significant bias – but, on the other hand, as Green explains, Diodorus spent 30 years compiling his work, and travelled widely to do so. He came, moreover, from Sicily, and may easily have had had access to older records from the province, while the writer long supposed to be his main source, Posidonius (whose work is lost), hailed from Apamea – the same city as Eunus – and had a known interest in slavery. It's certainly the case that the works of both Diodorus and Livy are studded with vivid details, which may suggest that they derive from unknown eye-witness accounts preserved in some lost history; Green argues a likely candidate is a monograph known to have once existed, *The Servile Wars*, by Caecilus – a rhetorician from Caleacte in northern Sicily who flourished in the time of Augustus. Equally – the view preferred by Peter Morton – the presence of these anecdotes may simply suggest that Diodorus penned what amounts to a literary argument, and felt no compunction in inventing evidence to fuel his attack on the decadence of Rome.



Slave chain-gang. The Romans used these men to work the fields of Sicily, and such groups probably made up the majority of Eunus's forces in the first days of the Servile War.

One rather alarming hint that this is indeed the case can be found in the remarkable parallels that Diodorus says existed between Eunus's rebellion and the Second Servile War, which broke out in the same province 30 years later (104-99 B.C.) In this account, both risings began with an attack on a single slaveowner, carried out by his own slaves, and each was led by a "magical king." Salvius, the rebel commander in the Second Servile War, possessed the power of divination and was apparently a devotee of the god Dionysius. He, like Eunus, was also reinforced by the army of a second slave leader, in this case a Cilician named Athenion. All in all, it's obvious

that our sources need to be treated cautiously, and that it is difficult to be certain of more than the broad outlines of Eunus's revolt.

What can safely be said, I feel, is that it's still possible to read between the lines of these accounts to discern a remarkable rebellion. We've already noted that the First Servile War was unprecedentedly large and unprecedentedly long-lasting. We know that Eunus's kingdom was attractive enough to secure the allegiance of many Sicilian freemen, and sophisticated enough to mint its own currency and maintain large armies in the field. (If Morton is correct, it was also capable of creating elaborate quasi-nationalistic propaganda.) It was sufficiently well-led win a number of major battles, capture several large Roman cities, and to defend them against the inevitable counter-attack. It maintained good supply lines and built up significant productive capacity – armies that may have numbered 15,000 or 20,000 men were both equipped and fed. The rebellion may even impacted on life in Rome itself; in what may or may not be a further coincidence, the revolt coincided with the rise of the populist "people's tribune" Gaius Gracchus, whose programme involved assuring every citizen of a supply of grain. In one reading of these events, Gracchus's platform was a response to a shortage of basic food stocks, directly caused by Eunus's revolt.

It was not until 133 B.C. that the Romans finally achieved the upper hand in Sicily. The turning point seems to have come with the arrival of the consul L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, who disembarked at the



Gaius Gracchus, the radical tribune of the plebs, whose political career was ended by a bloody assassination in 121

head of a force that may have comprised of two full legions, or about a quarter of the entire Roman army at this time. He promptly unleashed a flurry of disciplinary measures – "a new broom sweeping things very clean," says Green. It may be that, by this time, Eunus's regime was already struggling; it had simply grown too large to be self-sustaining, Bradley argues, and posed too much of a threat to Rome. If so, it was not found entirely wanting; the new Roman campaign was no more successful than its predecessors for the first few months, and a large force of cavalry, commanded by one Gaius Titus, was surrounded by Eunus's men and forced to disarm. According to Valerius Maximus, whose Memorable Deeds and Words was written in the first century A.D., Titus was severely punished for this extraordinary humiliation, being forced to wear a togal "cut into tatters," to forgo bathing, and to stand on guard barefooted outside Piso's headquarters for the remainder of his time on the island. His men were turned into a slingshot unit, the lowest of the low in the hierarchy of the Roman army.

Titus's defeat was also the last significant triumph enjoyed by Eunus. Piso himself took the field, and soon recovered the city of Morgantina, which fell after a siege. The rebel garrison – said to have been 8,000 strong – was crucified, and Piso advanced on Enna, which we know he reached because about 30 slingshot "bullets" stamped with his name were dug up outside the city walls in 1808; it is tempting to imagine these being among the equipment issued to Gaius Titus's disgraced cavalrymen. By this stage, Donaldson suggests, the rebels no longer felt confident of meeting the Romans in the open. Certainly what was left of their forces collapsed not in battle, but after a series of sieges.

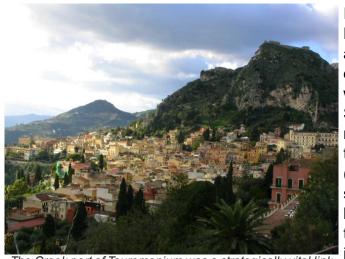


Taormina – Roman-era Tauromenium – showing the dramatic cliffs from which the men of Eunus's rebel garrison were hurled to their deaths after the fall of the city.

By the time that Piso was replaced by a nononsense former tax-clerk named Pubilius Rupilius in 132 B.C., the rebels were hard-pressed. Eunus's second city, Tauromenium, was placed under such a close investment that, we're told, the men of its garrison was forced to eat first their children, then their women, and eventually each other. Cleon's brother, Comanus, was captured in a fruitless attempt to break out of the encirclement, and the rebels were eventually betrayed by one Serapion – a name that suggests the man was a Graeco-Egyptian slave. This time the surviving members of the rebel garrison were scourged and then hurled to their deaths from the surrounding sea-cliffs.

That left Enna as the sole surviving rebel stronghold. It's not clear whether Piso had given up his siege before his departure from Sicily, or whether Rupilius took over an existing operation; either way, by the latter part of 132, Eunus and his remaining men were afflicted by plague and had been reduced to starvation. Cleon sallied from the city, much as his brother had done at Tauromenium, only to be cut down; his body, covered in wounds, was recovered and displayed before the city walls. Once again, we're told, the rebel stronghold fell not to a general assault, but as the result of betrayal from within (it's hard not to

suspect that Diodorus Siculus is making another of his rhetorical points by stressing all these parallels), and almost the whole garrison was massacred or hanged in chains.



The Greek port of Tauromenium was a strategically vital link in Eunus's east coast communications.

It was at this point that Eunus himself escaped from Enna. He did so surrounded by his bodyguard, an action that seems to undermine Diodorus's portrayal of him as "the cowardly king" - a man whom others would not serve. There can be little doubt that the Sicilian historian expected his readers to draw negative comparisons between Eunus, who fled to the mountains, and the the actions of the bodyguard (who, as we have seen, preferred honourable mass suicide to capture when their position became hopeless). But this rather begs the question of how the slave-king escaped from Enna in the first place, if not surrounded by loyal soldiers, and it also seems reasonable to question Diodorus's climactic account of Eunus's last hours. In this version of

events, the rebel leader ended his reign reduced to a ridiculous caricature of his former self accompanied, as he fled "in unmanly fashion" to a last bolthole in the mountains, only by a cook, a baker, a masseur and an entertainer whose role had been to arrange his banquets. As Morton points out, this is a portrayal of a man who had become the exact opposite of what Greek kings were supposed to be; rather than ending his reign fighting heroically, at the head of his men, Eunus did so in the company of a group of degenerates, apparently carefully chosen to symbolise the life of luxury he had chosen to lead. Diodorus even adds a neat little literary twist; a man who had begun his career as a servant beguiling his master, Antigenes, ended it in the company of a servant whose job it had been to beguile him.



A satirical (and thoroughly ahistorical) portrayal of the capture of Eunus, from (1852). The slave-king's bewilderment, and the motley group of companions captured with him, nonetheless accurately reflect the tone of Diodorus Sicculus's lines. Eunus himself wears a phrygian cap, the symbol of a revolutionary.

According to the *Library of History*, Eunus and his four degenerates were discovered hiding in a remote cave. Captured alive, he was taken off to Morgantina and thrown into a cell, where, before long, "his flesh disintegrated into a mass of lice" and he died. Bradley suggests scabies, but the reality is that Eunus's fatal disease may also be no more than a literary device; the end that Diodorus writes for him is typical of the fates reserved for evil men in much Roman history. Among other figures said to have ended their days consumed by worms or insects are Herod the Great, the Emperor Galerius (a keen persecutor of Christians) and one of the Roman Republic's most controversial strongmen, L. Cornelius Sulla.

With their leader gone, the rump of the rebel forces either surrendered or were disposed of in the mopping-up Gilbert a Beckett's Comic History of Rome operations that Rupilius launched across the length of Sicily. Now that the insurgents no longer posed much threat, we're told, the Romans stopped killing them. A slave economy needs slaves, and we are invited to suppose that what must have been a comparative handful of survivors (if Diodorus's accounts of massacres are true) returned to lives of servitude.

Certainly the aftermath of the rebellion was as dreadful in its own way as the rising had been at its height. According to Strabo, the geographer, much of the Sicilian interior around Enna remained depopulated 80 or 100 years after the First Servile War had ended – which, given what we know about the wealth of the area in Eunus's day suggests that considerable devastation must have been wrought by the rebels and the Romans. A new law code – the *Lex Rupilius* – was introduced, and Sicily reincorporated into the bosom of the Republic, at least until the outbreak of the Second Servile War.



The shackled skeleton unearthed near Bordeaux – note a second manacle around the leg.

Eunus's Hellenistic monarchy, that was vigorously swept aside. We hear no more of eunuch priests running through the streets with their severed genitals in bloody packages; no more of governments in which shock-haired kings engaged in ritual marriage with gods (as Green suggests the slave-king must have done with Atargatis). And though Eunus was not the last king to issue prophecies, he was the last who ever spoke with "tongues of fire" – whether or not those flames came from a walnut.

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19 thoughts on "King, magician, general ... slave: Eunus and the First Servile War against Rome"

1. Mary Job 16 July 2016 at 7:31 pm

Woooow. This made an interesting read, and ranks way less in my books when compared to watching the Spartacus movie. This I would like to watch, this would take years to produce. However, I think we ought to learn something from this in this century. Oppression in all forms should be fought against, this gives an idea of what would occur when a person(s) are under oppression. I enjoyed this a lot, thanks for sharing felt like I was in a cinema. The pictures did justice to the write up as well.

2. Giuseppina D'Amato 16 July 2016 at 8:58 pm

A very, very interesting post.

3. John Albert17 July 2016 at 12:24 am

The Romans had quite a lot of slave rebellions. Which isn't surprising, considering that in the later periods the helots outnumbered Roman citizens by as much as 7:1.

4. myeagermind 20 July 2016 at 9:57 pm

Reblogged this on Lenora's Culture Center and Foray into History.

5. fence 22 July 2016 at 10:43 am

Interesting article, thanks for posting. Had never heard of Eunus before.

6. Devonian22 July 2016 at 12:41 pm

I think the moral of the story is, if you force your underclass to become heavily armed brigands who must live by murder and theft to survive, while you administer constant cruelty on top, it will not end well for you. No matter how heavily imbued they are with the social system they were born into.

7. josher71 22 July 2016 at 1:03 pm

LOVE MIKE DASH

8. thelonius22 July 2016 at 2:45 pm

There's a remark somewhere in George Orwell about how terrifying it is that, out of millions of slaves in antiquity, only a handful of names are remembered or known.

Abehammerb Lincoln22 July 2016 at 2:50 pm

I was struck as a child that how few names are known from any age. And that I too would likely be unremembered within 100 years. I was kind of a dark kid.

9. Abehammerb Lincoln 22 July 2016 at 2:49 pm

it seems, the Sicily of the second century B.C. was a lethally dangerous place for a stranger to be. We are told that the whole island was "full of murder."

Has this changed? Ever?

10. mwhybark22 July 2016 at 6:34 pm

To my disappointment a cursory search finds no reference to Eunus in the works of David Brion Davis, yet surely this lesson of Roman history undergirds so much of American history.

A secondary observation: 'He breathed out sparks and fire as he spoke, "as from a burning lamp" – an effect that he supposedly produced by concealing a hollow nut-shell with holes drilled in it in his mouth, and filling it with "sulphur and with fire."

Surely, then Eunus, who apparently although quite unsupported by any etymological documentation I could find either lent or took his slave-name from the word or referent "eunuch" must be the prefigurator of GRRM's GoT playa known as Varys. The article dodges the issue but notes that Eunus' probable faith practice included violent public self-castration).

Bloater23 July 2016 at 11:29 am

Putting on a play depicting the violent retribution meted out to your enemies is pretty GoT Season 6, as well – and you can hear Dany Targaryen in Diodorus's comment that the slaves' greatest weapon was "their angry determination to wipe out their arrogant masters."

11. Heywood Mogroot III 22 July 2016 at 7:22 pm

Arguing somewhere else on the internet today it struck me that Ancient Rome was something of an analogue to The Hunger Games, not just a future dystopia, with the large idle urban capital population(s) dependent on the provinces for food.

12. LHS

23 July 2016 at 9:46 pm

Another fascinating foray into history; I (and so many others, I suspect) await all of your posts with such eager delight, Mr Dash. Thank you again for this articulate glimpse into an extraordinary man, in an extraordinary time...

13. revelation21st 1 August 2016 at 6:44 pm

This was excellent! Loved it!

14. Brian Gatten4 August 2016 at 2:13 pm

This was a great read, but you keep writing "Cicilians" for "Cilicians." That's especially confusing in an article about Sicilian history.

allkindsofhistory4 August 2016 at 3:45 pm

Thank you for alerting me to this. Corrections made!

15. Nick Flowers 28 August 2016 at 9:49 am

I think that the siege and fall of Masada (in your third paragraph) was later than the 31BC you say. I seem to remember that it is described by Flavius Josephus in The Jewish War around 73 AD. Legio X Fretensis under Lucius Flavius Silva did the job, the reigning Emperor being Vespasian.

allkindsofhistory28 August 2016 at 10:36 am

You're right – I was confusing the date that Herod built the fortress with the date of its fall. Fixed.

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The Evolution of Folklore

wordpress.com



Some people watch the show. Some sit there and take notes. August 31, 2012 · by Lyncath · in Current Events, Uncategorized · 11 Comments

The Evolution of Folklore **Urban Legend: Slender Man**

I have been fascinated by myths and legends for as long as I can remember. Whether it is Jason & The Argonauts or Roswell Aliens our stories come to define generations and their values. When looking at ancient Greek mythology such as The Odyssey or Herakles one can discern what Greek society valued and thought about the natural and supernatural worlds. By that same gesture looking at more modern myths such as the Roswell Conspiracy and the mystery surrounding 'Crop Circles' one can again see how contemporary society approaches the same issues.

These myths and legends were not authored by individuals the way stories and novels are today, they evolved naturally, instinctively, and collectively through unconscious processes embedded in oral and written traditions. At their core mythology always began as made-up or true stories, revelations or dreams. The process in which mythology is formed goes something like this: Begin with a real or fabricated incident, or an event that was worth remembering, or something so intriguing that one would feel compelled to repeat it over and over. This story would then be passed down through word of mouth and written text, from person to person and from generation to generation until it had been told and retold millions of times and existed in a hundred different versions all over the world.

The exact same can be said about modern day myths, the image might have changed but the process has largely remained unchanged.

I have been following the development of one such emerging 'urban legend': Slender Man.



Slender Man

At the moment not a whole lot is known about the mythos of the paranormal creature known as "Slender Man" but he is normally depicted as being exceedingly tall and wearing a jet-black black suit. While this may not initially appear to be even remotely scary there is still more to come. Slender Man's other attributes include his unusually thin limbs akin to branches. His face is featureless and white as a sheet, although some variations claim that he can morph his face into whatever you fear the most – similar to a Boggart from the Harry Potter books. His serpentine arms can stretch out to extraordinary lengths to seize his victims. Slender Man takes joy in physically and mentally haunting people who are unfortunate enough to see him, once visual contact has been made he will linger in your mind like Freddy Kruger. While he has no clear agenda with regards to who he targets Slender Man has an affinity for younger victims, those more impressionable and vunerable to his antics. Many accounts also depict him possessing a number of bizarrely shaped, jet-black 'tentacles' protruding from his upper back that are used to hold him aloft off the ground for quicker and quieter movement – another stealthy

stratagem. There are even claims that Slender Man has the ability to imitate the voices of his victims' loved ones, further preying on their psyche.

Slender Man is a stalker in the purest sense of the word who likes to hide in plain sight and is commonly spotted in wooded areas where he can easily blend amongst the trees and dark corners of the forest. When he finds his next victim he follows them relentlessly, misleading and disorientating his prey to the point of sheer terror and

insanity. Stranger still Slender Man has a habit of briefly revealing his physical presence to his targets to further unhinge them: It is still uncertain why he does this.

Who is the Slender Man? Where did he come from? What does he want?

According to the popular American legend he was once a man who was tortured viciously as a result of a family feud involving his children. He was first beaten to death with a log, impaled with a branch or pole and hung from a tree with his arms and legs amputated. Now he roams the world in a supernatural form seeking justice, his blank visage hiding the enduring pain of his ordeal. If one is captured by the Slender Man they are said to awaken finding him standing above them. He will then task the person with a riddle relating to a conundrum or sin they may have previously committed but never owned up to. If you answer truthfully he will spare your life but break both your arms and legs as penance. If you either refuse to answer (through sheer terror or otherwise), or answer untruthfully his long appendages will extract your heavy heart, weighed down by sin, through your throat. In circles on the internet Slender Man is claimed to be the creation of a website called somethingawful.com. While many say that this alone debunks the mysterious legend and closes the case on the creature's fictitious existence there is more here than meets the eye...



Depicted here is "Der Ritter" (The Knight) to the left fighting "Der Grossman" (The Tall Man).

I mentioned in my opening paragraph that myths and legends evolve over time and the case of the Slender Man is a prime example of such a phenomenon. As it transpires the legend of the Slender Man goes back a lot further through history as opposed to merely being something fabricated on the internet. The earliest recorded sighting of the Slender Man was around 16th century Germany, found in a woodcut carving by Hans Freckenberg (Pictured Right), a renaissance artist who mysteriously vanished shortly after completing his two works featuring this bizarre human figure. In these two woodcuts something called **Der Grossman**, meaning "tall man" is featured. The Germanic legend says that misbehaving children would encounter Der Grossman days before mysteriously disappearing, never to be seen again. On the occasion that the creature was encountered and met with violence he would exact retribution on the town nearest to where his prey was caught. Der Grossman would infiltrate the town and single out certain villagers, possibly those with darker or violent hearts, and impale them on high branches of trees - an echo of his supposed origins. The depiction of Der Grossman is interesting because it bears very little resemblance to any of Freckenberg's other works; He was known for his accuracy in presenting human anatomy so the two woodcuts of this skeletal figure have baffled historians since they were uncovered around the 19th century.

Stories of people encountering the creature around this period can be found all over Europe, there are a few variations on the mythology here and there but the core elements remain untouched. The following is part of a story from Romanian folktale that tells of twin sisters *Sorina* and *Stela* that were led out into the woods one day by their mother.

They could see it (Der Grossman) close by, dressed as a nobleman, it's arms boneless as snakes and sharp as swords. The mother, under the order of the creature, told her daughter Stela to cut a circle in the ground with a knife and have Sorina lay down in the middle to be cut open. Stela refused and ran home to hide under her bed. When their father returned home, his terrified daughter told him what had transpired and he then went into the forest to track down the twins' mother. The girl fell asleep to be awakened by a knock on the door. "Open the door, it's your father." a voice said.

The girl refused. "Open the door it's your mother," the voice continued.

Upon refusing once again, the door flew open to reveal the horrible sight of her mother holding the severed head of her sister Sorina in one hand and the head of her father in the other. "Why?" cried Stela.

"Because," said her mother, "There is no reward for goodness in this world, nothing but cold steel teeth and scourging fire for all of us. And it's coming for you now." At that moment, the fiend emerged from the fireplace and swept up the surviving twin in his burning embrace.

This harrowing tale suggests that Der Grossman "Slender Man" is capable of hypnotism, or is capable of manipulating the fears of his victims in order to bend them to his will. While these traits might be found in stories told in Romania they might not be found in other countries' interpretations.

Other interpretations of Slender Man can be found in 18th century English, Welsh, and Scottish folklore. Here he is known as **Fear Dubh (The Black Man)**, **The Clutchbone**, and **The Faceless One**. The Welsh accounts of "The Faceless One" even spawned a macabre lullaby,

'Hush, thy childe, do not stray far from the path, or The Faceless One shall steal you away to Fairieland. He preys on sinful and defiant souls, and lurks within the woods. He has hands of ebony branches, and a touch as soft as silk. Fear The Faceless One thy childe, for he shall take you to a dark place. And what shall become of thou? Noone knows, so be good, thy little one-Alas! He is here to take thou away!'

The legend of Slender Man originates from the folklore of the old world, it is a legend that has withstood the test of time and has evolved through modern media. There is nothing even remotely silly about it, the fact that this latest resurgence into popular culture came about as a result of the internet does not harm the legend's credibility either. Like I mentioned earlier, in ancient Greece mythology began as stories shared in communities and folklore began as stories told around campfires and in town halls. The modern day equivalent of this is the internet, the next evolutionary step in the way we share stories with each other. If you ask me what makes this creature so terrifying is that after all this time, people are still questioning his existence. Websites have been flooded with people claiming to have had encounters and/or sightings of the Slender Man, especially those that live near forested areas. To make this creature even stranger it seems that the more one talks about or researches the Slender Man, the more likely they are to encounter him; bringing life to a legend, bringing life to their fears.

What makes him so terrifying to others? Why has he been remembered for centuries? Is it because of his ability to prey on and derive joy from mankind's palette of common fears: Isolation, Darkness, Despair, Truth, and Pain? Is it because he chooses to wear a suit normally associated with authority figures? Or is it because he is what we have all collectively made him: Immortal and everlasting?

To end on what I feel is a fitting analogy: Myths and legends enduring and evolving is happening more frequently than most people notice. Point & Case: 1476's *Vlad the Impaler* to 1897's *Bam Stoker's Dracula* to 2005's *Twilight*.

Most of popular culture's comic book heroes are derived from the myths and legends of old. Point & Case: The Nordic god *Thor* becoming *Marvel Comic's "Thor"*.

Maybe I am taking the mythology on offer here a little too seriously, but I find the circumstances and means of Slender Man's resurgence absolutely fascinating!

Anyways, watch your back out there everyone... There might be something out there...

Tags: , , , ,

11 comments

1. ninetyninepercentgaming · August 31, 2012 - 10:41 am · Reply→

Brilliant post! I absolutely love the Slender Man lore, and this is the best summary of it that I've ever seen. Really good post, Sir.

1. dale100889 · August 31, 2012 - 12:58 pm · Reply→

It's really fascinating, a modern day urban legend! In particular I find it interesting to see how modern day mythology is created, it is a community effort and it really shows in this case.

2. michelinewalker · September 2, 2012 - 12:35 am · Reply→

This is an extraordinary post. I love the way you look at the big picture and not a tiny fragment of history. Thank you.

1. dale100889 · September 2, 2012 - 7:02 pm · Reply→

A habit picked up from studying History! I am about to undertake a History degree at University, I actually started blogging because it helps me keep on top of my writing between terms.

Thanks for the comment, it's great to have feedback!

1. michelinewalker · September 2, 2012 - 8:54 pm ·

History is a marvellous subject matter. That is a great post. Best, Micheline

3. rawrrmusic · September 2, 2012 - 5:31 am · Reply→

I have to say, I've never heard of the "slender man" lore, but there was a version of him in a cartoon series. Creepy right?!

1. dale100889 · September 2, 2012 - 9:28 am · Reply→

He's probably looking through my window right now...

4. writingunderdog · September 4, 2012 - 4:13 pm · Reply→

Reblogged this on Writing Underdog and commented:

I always liked myths and legends. It's awesome to be able to watch one from its birth.

5. Pope · February 21, 2014 - 8:43 pm · Reply→

Regarding The Faceless Man, 18th century Welsh lullaby. is there are citation for this? Where might I find more about this?

6. Nate · March 19, 2014 - 2:38 am · Reply→

I'd also like to know a little more about The Faceless One in Welsh folkore, and was wondering if anyone had any further reading. Is there a version of the lullaby in Welsh?

7. Jayson · August 30, 2014 - 5:50 pm · Reply→

Hi there. First let me say that this is a excellent post on the folklore, I myself have researched a little into myths, mostly on Vlad and Bloody Mary. If you don't mind me asking, where did you find the legend of the Tall Man? I'm doing a research project for my Horror/Sci-fi Lit class and i would like some credible sources to add. Thanks and again, really excellent post.

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Ex-cop fired after reporting seeing ghosts reaches settlement

nypost.com

By Philip Messing

September 4, 2016 6:29pm

My bosses want me fired because I believe in ghosts

A former Department of Veteran Affairs cop who lost his job after he reported seeing ghosts at the New Jersey hospital he was assigned to has reached a settlement with the agency, his lawyer said.

It rescinds Valdo Vaher's 2014 firing and allows him to retire, wipes out all disciplinary charges against him and awards him back pay.

Vaher, 50, was sacked after he gave an interview to The Post claiming that the East Orange VA Hospital was haunted.

"This seems strange to some people, but for religious Catholics like myself, many feel as I do about this — that there are spirits in the world and they sometimes show themselves and are more likely to be doing this in and around hospitals, where people suffer and die," he said in the interview.

After the story was published he was fired, ostensibly because he fell asleep at work, improperly used a worker computer and refused to submit to psychological testing.

It was the second time he'd been fired – that first time was in 2013 for alleged disciplinary infractions that he claimed were bogus. A federal judge agreed with his claim that he lost his job because he was a whistle blower after reporting misconduct by his superiors.

Speaking about the latest case, his lawyer, Alan Wolin, said the VA "saw the error of its ways and settled the case."

Vaher said, "I'm very happy at how things turned out and that my record has finally been cleared."

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Japanese spa offers 'exorcism' for your dog

ottawasun.com



First posted: Wednesday, July 06, 2016 02:31 PM EDT | Updated: Wednesday, July 06, 2016 02:37 PM EDT

A Japanese dog spa has taken pet pampering to a whole new level by offering "exorcisms" for their furry guests.

The D+Kirishima spa not only offers the latest in formal kaiseki doggy-owner dinners and spa baths together (yes, together in the same bath), but also a package called the "Pet Dog Exorcism Plan."

A senior Shinto priest will come to the spa to conduct a ceremonial blessing to rid your pup of bad spirits and pray for its future health.

The ceremony is especially suggested for dogs in their "unlucky health years."

"Seven-year-old, 10-year-old, and 13-year-old dogs need to be careful of their health, as it's easier in those years for them to gets diseases of aging," according to the spa's pitch for the package.

"The exorcism for your dog is celebrated along with its owner at the Shingariyu shrine within the hotel."

It only takes 30 minutes, according to the site. And it costs \$430 -- room and pet-owner dinner included



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Extinct 'Micro Lion' Is Named For Sir David Attenborough

August 23, 2016 npr.org





Peter Schouten/Courtesy of the University of New South Wales hide caption toggle caption Peter Schouten/Courtesy of the University of New South Wales Paleoartist Peter Schouten's reconstruction of Microleo attenboroughi prowling pounds, very likely lived in along the branches of rain forest trees in search of prey. Paleoartist Peter Schouten's reconstruction of Microleo attenboroughi prowling along the branches of rain forest trees in search of prey. Peter Schouten/Courtesy of the University of New South Wales

Paleoartist Peter Schouten's reconstruction of Microleo attenboroughi prowling along the branches of rain forest trees in search of prey.

Paleontologists at the University of New South Wales in Australia say they have identified a tiny new species of marsupial lion that lived around 18 million years ago.

The extinct, squirrel-size animal weighed about 1.3 trees and had teeth that suggest it was capable of ripping apart other small creatures with its molars.

The researchers named it *Microleo attenboroughi* in honor of Sir David Attenborough, the famed British naturalist who has hosted numerous documentaries on wildlife.

As the researchers write in their study, published in the online journal *Palaeontologia Electronica*, the etymology of the name is:

"From micro meaning small (Greek) and leo meaning lion (Latin). The species name honors Sir David Attenborough for his dedication and enthusiasm in promoting the natural history of the world and the palaeontological treasures of the Riversleigh World Heritage Area in particular."

M. attenboroughi is the ninth, and smallest, marsupial lion species paleontologists have identified from fossils recovered at the Riversleigh World Heritage fossil site in Queensland, Australia. The first such species, Thylacoleo carnifex, which was identified in 1858 and more fully described in 1999, was much larger than the newly identified "micro lion." T. carnifex was about 5 feet long, 2 feet tall, and had the impressive ability to rip through prey with its jaws.

On its website, the Australian Museum describes T. carnifex's bite as "the most powerful bite of any mammalian predator, living or extinct" and says "it could have taken prey much larger than itself."

The other species range in size from that of a leopard down to the size of a dog. Over time, Australian marsupial lions grew in size, from the Miocene period, when the newly discovered lion species lived, up to the Pleistocene period, when *T. carnifex* hunted. At any given point over about 5 million years, no more than two species of Australian marsupial lion existed at the same time.

Marsupial lions are not the ancestors of modern lions living in parts of Africa, though they are related to modern marsupials such as koalas. The term "lion" refers instead to the status of the ancient hunters as dangerous carnivores, much like the current status of big cats.

M. attenboroughi is not alone in its honorific name among the prehistoric marsupial lions of Australia.

There's also Whollydooleya tomnpatrichorum, another recently discovered species. That animal, which is slightly larger than Attenborough's namesake and has sharper teeth, was discovered at a fossil site called Wholly Dooley. Its name pays tribute to Australian paleontologists Tom and Pat Rich.

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Five hundred years on, meet the ship's carpenter from the Mary Rose

18:14 EST, 4 September 2016 | dailymail.co.uk



500 years on, meet the ship's carpenter from the Mary Rose! Face of sailor who died on the doomed Tudor vessel is revealed

- MailOnline US news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories
- Artist's impression shows a sailor believed to be the ship's carpenter
- His bones were retrieved from the depths of

the Solent

- Remains were found in a cabin used to store cable and he wore a tool belt
- Launched in 1511, the Mary Rose was the Tudor king's flagship for 34 years

By Fiona Macrae Science Editor For The Daily Mail



This artist's impression shows a powerfully-built sailor believed to be the Mary Rose's carpenter

Almost 500 years after she sank, the Mary Rose is still giving up her secrets.

This artist's impression shows a powerfully-built sailor believed to be the ship's carpenter – a man in his mid to late 30s, who was around 5ft 8in tall and died below deck.

But the identities of hundreds of other drowned sailors remain a mystery, which British scientists hope to solve with help from international academics.

By assembling bones retrieved from the depths of the Solent, they already know the carpenter's teeth were rotten, with a major abscess, and he had arthritis and skull pitting suggesting scurvy.

His remains were found in a cabin used to store cable, he wore a tool belt, and the remains of a dog, a brown Jack Russell cross experts nicknamed Hatch, were discovered nearby.

Examination of his skull was used to create an image of a man with a broad face, deep-set eyes, thin lips and a boxer's nose.

While he is depicted with light brown hair and blue eyes, only DNA analysis would confirm this.

And by photographing and scanning thousands of other unidentified bones, experts hope to piece together whole skeletons by putting them online.

While much has been learnt about Henry VIII's favourite ship since she was raised in 1982, the remains of many – including the captain, navigator, boatswain and surgeon – are still unidentified.

Launched in 1511, the Mary Rose was the Tudor king's flagship for 34 years before she sank off Portsmouth in a battle with the French in 1545. Around 500 men were aboard and just 35 survived.

During excavation, some 10,000 bones belonging to more than 400 crew were recovered from the seabed.



Launched in 1511, the Mary Rose (pictured) was the Tudor king's flagship for 34 years before she sank off Portsmouth in a battle with the French in 1545

Some 92 skeletons have been partly assembled, including those of the carpenter, a gunner, purser and cook, plus several archers and officers.

But the bones are delicate and the work is complex, time-consuming and relies on a lot of luck.

Making them available to academics around the world via a password-protected website could vastly speed up the process, the British Science Festival in Swansea will hear this week.

Swansea University experts and the Mary Rose Trust have already put detailed images of ten skulls online.

The 3D images, created by stitching together hundreds of high-resolution photos, can be twisted and turned, magnified and shrunk.



By assembling bones (pictured) retrieved from the depths of the Solent, they already know the carpenter's teeth were rotten, with a major abscess, and he had arthritis and skull pitting suggesting scurvy

The Virtual Tudors site, launched today, also has a public section featuring the carpenter's skull.

Alex Hildred, head of research at the trust, said: 'Excavating the cabin was like stepping into a deserted workshop. There were things hanging up tucked between frames, like a grandfather's shed.'

Some of the carpenter's tools are also on display online

and at the Mary Rose Museum in Portsmouth.

Dr Hildred added: 'If we can make that assemblage accessible in a number of ways, then we are engaging more people than we can just in the museum.'

Find out more by visiting www.virtualtudors.org



Comments (

UKIPforthehotseat, London, United Kingdom, 13 minutes ago

A time when we actually invested in our navy

Shamrock2014, Bardouhah, Fiji, 34 minutes ago

No earring?

onlineve, London, United Kingdom, 37 minutes ago

He could have sketched ANYONE and still got paid. What nonsense!

Maggie, Oxford, United Kingdom, 38 minutes ago

He seems to be white. Is that permitted?

ElsieW, England UK, United Kingdom, 41 minutes ago

What an amazing thing to be able to do.

Catherine Cookson, middle, United Kingdom, about an hour ago

Fascinating .. why did they stop making the "Cold Case" archaeology show. ?

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Lucian Freud painting denied as his is genuine, BBC finds - BBC News

bbc.com



http://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-36822128



The origin of the painting was uncovered on Fake or Fortune presented by Fiona

Bruce and art historian Philip Mould

An early Lucian Freud painting worth at least £300,000 has been identified by the BBC, despite the artist's own denials that it was his work.

The painting, by the acclaimed portrait artist who died in 2011, was identified by BBC One show Fake Or Fortune.

Experts at Christie's

auction house claimed it to be a Freud in 1985, but the artist denied it was his.

However notes uncovered from the artist's former solicitor and further analysis prove the painting was by him.

Fake Or Fortune presenters Fiona Bruce and art historian Philip Mould had the breakthrough when they spoke to the solicitor, who found a note in her files of a phone conversation with Freud from 2006.

The artist apparently said he had started the painting, but it had actually been completed by someone else and for this reason, he would not acknowledge it as his own work.

Now after analysis of the techniques and materials used in the painting, three Freud experts said they believed the painting was solely by him, likely from 1939.

It is claimed the artist's reticence in acknowledging the work was down to the fact that it was originally owned by Denis Wirth-Miller, an artist with whom Freud had a long-running feud. Denying authorship meant it was impossible for it to be sold under his name.

London-based designer Jon Turner, who inherited the painting of a man in a black cravat, said he spent years trying to authenticate the portrait but he believed Freud had continued to prevent his investigations.

Image caption The realist painter was one of Britain's most distinguished and highly regarded artists

Mr Mould, who valued the painting at £300,000 or more, said: "It was a novel and gargantuan task to overturn the reported views of the artist.

"It was different from anything we'd taken on until now - we had never had to arm-wrestle with the words of an artist beyond the grave.

"It was all the more frustrating as the more I worked on the picture and Fiona was able to add the background with her enquiries, the more I felt confident about it being entirely by Freud."

A grandson of the psycho-analyst Sigmund Freud and the son of an architect, Lucian was born in Berlin in 1922 and fled from Nazi Germany to Britain with his Jewish family in 1933, when he was 10.

After attending art school as a teenager, Freud was soon recognised as a brilliant talent. He said his work was purely autobiographical - painting "the people that interest me and that I care about and think about in rooms I live in and know".

Ms Bruce added: "As this investigation progressed we had to investigate Freud the man as much as the painting. He was an extraordinary and controversial character."

It is not the first time the BBC programme has made such a discovery. In 2014, a painting thought to be by Russian-born artist Marc Chagall bought for £100,000, was found to be a fake and had to be destroyed.

Fake or Fortune? is broadcast on Sundays at 20:00 GMT on BBC One. It is available nationwide for seven days thereafter on the iPlayer.

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Image copyright Getty Images

Usain Bolt: Fastest Man Alive and Illuminati Member?

2016-08-23T10:23:00Z vanityfair.com





Usain Bolt: Fastest Man Alive and Illuminati Member?

It's all about his hand signals.

Kenzie Bryant

August 23, 2016 10:23 am

Left, by Shaun Botterill; Right, by Phil Walter, both from Getty Images.

Conspiracy theories are a slippery slope. One minute you're watching **Usain Bolt** celebrate nine total Olympic gold medals in front of millions of viewers, and the next, Bolt flashes the "okay" hands. According to a handful of Illuminati conspiracy theorists, these signal his participation in a clandestine community of elite members of society who run the world.

The hand sign has a history in sports. The "three-point goggles" became a popular celebratory gesture for sinking a three in basketball. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, it started as a joke about eyesight between two Portland Trail Blazer players, and spread through the N.B.A. and college basketball. Bolt was celebrating a different three—he won the 100 meters, 200 meters, and sprint relay titles at three consecutive Olympics, which is collectively known by its sports monikers, the threepeat or triple triple. That's three fingers for three events in three Olympics.

If this sounds like it all makes *too much* sense, and also you believe demonic forces made deals with members of the entertainment industry to carry out the overarching plots to control humanity, then you might have something in common with a couple of so-called conspiracy theorists. One YouTuber, who prefers to go by his channel name, "What is Real," explains how this hand gesture and a few others that Bolt flashed to the camera during the Olympics are associated with such secret societies as the Illuminati or Free Masons.

The symbol that kicked off "What is Real"'s fall down the rabbit hole of hand signals was the "all-seeing eye," or covering one eye with a hand. The other one, hands over the lips like you're saying "shhh," is the "symbol of silence, which is the masonic gesture that a cultist will do in public to indicate that they are quiet about what's really going on," according to the video. Addressing "all you doubters out there that the symbol of silence is actually a thing that people display publicly," he offered old photos of **David Bowie**, **Lindsay Lohan**, and "the occult queen" **Lady Gaga** with their hands over their lips, too.

"What is Real" would rather refer to his hobby as "pop-culture esoteric analysts" instead of "conspiracy theorist." He told VF.com over e-mail on Monday that, "I enjoyed watching Bolt perform, and the general sense I get from the guy is a good one. In all of his interviews I have seen, he seems like a genuinely kind and positive person."

"What I meant by embodying occult archetypes," he explained, "is I have noticed a phenomena of certain popular figures having a common esoteric theme throughout parts of their careers. It would take a literal book to fully explain what I mean by this."

There are many other videos on the matter if you're also deeply invested in losing an afternoon. Some even caught on during the last Olympics in London. Unsurprisingly, the games are a boon for all kinds of Illuminati theorizers, from dabblers to hardcore enthusiasts.

Katelyn Hempstead of *The Lizard People*, a podcast during which she invites guests to try to convince her of the most popular and/or most bizarre conspiracy theories, tried to add some context to these videos. Though her show is comedic rather than scientific, Hempstead has noticed some trends after 22 episodes over 9 months. "These videos are fairly par for the course on Illuminati and secret-society theories, in terms of evidence and thoroughness," she told VF.com in an e-mail on Monday. "From what I've seen, they tend to be heavy on imagery and light on analysis, and framed as 'I'm not making an argument, just pointing out the suspicious evidence!""

Some of the videos, like this one by "The Vigilant Christian," "follow the trend of cramming in every corollary theory they possibly can, from global warming to gene alteration to Satanism," and each one tends to "spiral out from one hand gesture into the world-wide all-encompassing hegemonic domination by the elite."

Hempstead often wonders in her work, "What's the advantage of having a member of your secret society basically yell 'hey I'm part of a secret society!' on international TV?"

"What is Real" has a go-to answer for that: "The best way I can put it is when a child is very young and parents spell out a word they don't want the child to hear, and the child does not perceive what is being communicated because the child is not equipped with that knowledge yet. I see it kind of like that, symbol illiteracy, so it doesn't matter if its shown right in front of the faces of the uninitiated. It's simply a symbolic language that most of the masses are not privy to."

So according to several theorists and at least one "pop-culture esoteric analyst," there's a decent chance that Usain Bolt is a member of a secret cabal that runs the entertainment, business, and political worlds. Just follow the hands, sheeple.

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By Daniel Uria | Aug. 10, 2016 at 3:57 PM Follow @oddnewsupi



A fiberglass pig was stolen from in front of a New York home and replaced with a cooler full of bacon. Owner Peter McGuire said it was the second time the colorful statue has been kidnapped.Screen capture/WNYT/Inform Inc.

GUILDERLAND, N.Y., Aug. 10 (UPI) -- A fiberglass pig that resided outside of a New York home for several years disappeared last Thursday.

The pig's owner Peter McGuire told News 10 a cooler full of bacon was left in the place of the

colorful statue, but he was not concerned about the pig's whereabouts.

"It's been kidnapped. It's the second time it's been kidnapped," he said."I'm sure somebody would have some sort of demands, otherwise, they wouldn't have left me a cooler and bacon."

McGuire told WNYT the first kidnapping also saw the pig replaced, along with a ransom note.

"The pig was kidnapped and they left a regular piggy bank with a ransom note," he said. "I think it was 10 lottery tickets and a bag of pretzels. And I was not willing to cave in."

McGuire said the pig often gets repainted in different colors or patterns and has turned up in various places throughout the neighborhood.

"It's been in a tree, it's been in my neighbor's boat, we moved it across the street, we had a rubber chicken and said 'Why did the pig cross the street? Because the chicken was on this side," McGuire said. "We've done all kinds of things with the pig all in fun and people just kind of gravitate towards it and drive by the house looking for it."

McGuire left an ominous note on an obituary page in the cooler warning that an ill fate may befall the thief if his pig is harmed, although he said the act was "all in good fun."

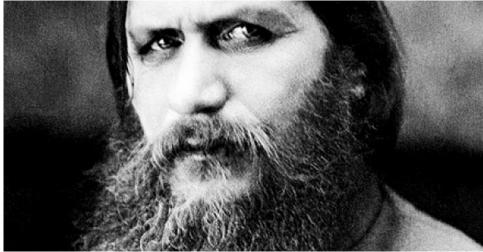
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The Strange Reason Nearly Every Film Ends by Saying It's Fiction (You Guessed It: Rasputin!)

slate.com

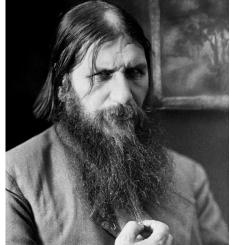
Aug. 26 2016 7:43 AM



160826_bb_rasp_2

Wikimedia Commons

Virtually every film in modern memory ends with some variation of the same disclaimer: "This is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events, is purely coincidental." The cut-and-paste legal rider must be the most boring thing in every movie that features it. Who knew its origins were so lurid?



Thanks, Rasputin.

For that bit of boilerplate, we can indirectly thank none other than Grigori Rasputin, the famously hard-to-assassinate Russian mystic and intimate of the last, doomed Romanovs. It all started when an exiled Russian prince sued MGM in 1933 over the studio's Rasputin biopic, claiming that the American production did not accurately depict Rasputin's murder. And the prince ought to have known, having murdered him.

Here's the story. In 1916, the fabulously wealthy, Oxford-educated Prince Felix Yusupov was one of several Russian aristocrats agonizing over the unseemly influence that Rasputin—the magical healer, charismatic lech, and peasant—had over the Tsar and, particularly, the Tsarina. In December, Yusupov invited Rasputin to

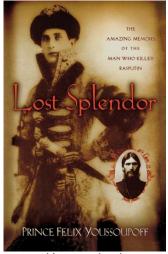
his palace, where he offered him cyanide-laced cakes and then shot him.

Although the Tsarina was distraught, the Tsar let Yusupov off lightly, exiling the prince and his wife Irina. (In doing so, he inadvertently spared them from the impending slaughter of the revolution.)

Sixteen years later, MGM produced *Rasputin and the Empress*, based on those events. Its big coup was casting the three Barrymore siblings—stars of stage and silent film—in the lead roles. Lionel played Rasputin, Ethel the Tsarina, and John (grandfather of Drew) was "Prince Paul Chegodieff," a composite, who murders Rasputin.

Book cover

Yusupov, now penniless in Paris, heard about the film and thought it defamatory. He argued audiences would recognize him in the fictional assassin—in part because he'd publicly cashed in on his infamy, penning a braggy memoir about killing Rasputin. He wasn't wrong: The *New York Times*, in its review, noted that Chegodieff was "really intended to represent [Yusupov]."

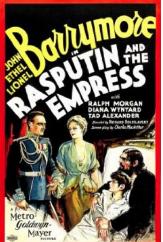


Yusupov-book

But having copped to being a murderer, Yusupov couldn't build much of a libel case. Instead, he alleged that *Rasputin and the Empress* in fact defamed his wife.

In the film, Chegodieff's wife is "Princess Natasha," a supporter of Rasputin. But the mystic, wary of her husband, hypnotizes and rapes her, rendering Natasha—by his logic, with which she agrees—unfit to be a wife. Yusupov contended that as viewers would equate Chegodieff with Yusupov, so would they link Natasha with Irina. But while Yusupov was portrayed more or less accurately, Irina and Rasputin had never met. (The scene also libeled Rasputin, but him being dead, you could say anything, then as now: "Rasputin sucks," "Rasputin liked to caress his big beard and give it little kisses," etc.)

An MGM researcher had pointed out this factual discrepancy to the studio during production and warned that the Yusupovs could sue; they fired her. MGM was satisfied, dramatically, with the rape scene, despite there being no basis for it in real life. If it was shock they were interested in, one could imagine them constructing a similar scene around Rasputin and the Tsarina—about whom there *were* prurient rumors, which Rasputin himself encouraged by whipping his dick out in a restaurant and boasting of giving it to "the old girl"—but MGM couldn't do that after casting a real-life brother and sister in those roles.



Poster

Irina Yusupov sued the studio, and the jury found in her favor, awarding her £25,000, or about \$125,000. MGM had to take the film out of circulation for decades and purge the offending scene for all time.

What proved to be MGM's undoing was its lack of deniability. Unwisely, they'd prefaced the film with this: "This concerns the destruction of an empire ... A few of the characters are still alive—the rest met death by violence." From that, audiences could logically infer that the Yusupovs, being the only relevant characters still alive, were represented as the Chegodieffs.

A justice in the case told MGM that the studio might have stood a better RasputinAndTheEmpress193 chance had they incorporated a disclaimer stating the exact opposite: that the film was not intended as an accurate portrayal of real people or events.

Apparently overcautious in the wake of the landmark lawsuit, the film industry slapped that wording on everything. For decades, films disclaimed absolutely any relationship to reality—even when it was patently untrue. The Jake LaMotta biopic *Raging Bull* credits LaMotta as a consultant and cites his memoir as a source text just minutes before asserting that he is the film's entirely fictional invention.

It's only recently that studios have relaxed the disclaimer to allow that certain films are inspired, in part, by real events—maybe that's because, in 1967, Felix Yusupov finally died. Now, blessedly, you can say whatever you want about him.

Duncan Fyfe is a freelance writer based in London. Find his work at duncanfyfe.net

ALL CHARACTERS AND
EVENTS IN THIS SHOW-EVEN THOSE BASED ON REAL
PEOPLE--ARE ENTIRELY FICTIONAL.
ALL CELEBRITY VOICES ARE
IMPERSONATED.....POORLY. THE
FOLLOWING PROGRAM CONTAINS
COARSE LANGUAGE AND DUE TO
ITS CONTENT IT SHOULD NOT BE
VIEWED BY ANYONE

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The disclaimer as it appears before an episode of South Park.

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Scientists finally found Zenkerella, the world's most mysterious mammal

By Sarah Kaplan
August 16 at 9:00 AM washingtonpost.com

The Washington Post



The second male specimen of Zenkerella insignis was found near the village of Ureca on Bioko, an island off the west coast of Africa. (Steven Heritage)

specimen sat in alcohol at the bottom of an opaque plastic container. Its luxuriant black fur was dark and matted, its characteristic tail curled. David Fernandez peered at the odd-looking critter, which he'd spent the better part of the past year trying to track down, and hoped it was the real thing.

Fernandez had worked on Bioko Island in Equatorial Guinea for 14 years, but he'd never seen one of these animals in its entirety before. No scientist ever had.

He lifted the specimen out of its container and snapped a photo with his phone. Then he texted the image to his colleague Erik Seiffert, one of the few people in the world who would recognize the creature.

Seiffert immediately texted back: That's Zenkerella.

"I think he was even more excited than I was," Fernandez recalled. "It was amazing, the first entire specimen available for us, and for science basically."

Zenkerella insignis, the critter caught on Bioko, is one of the world's most ancient and mysterious mammals. Until now, it was known only by its fossils and 11 scattered specimens, many of which had been languishing in natural history collections for over 100 years. Researchers who were interested in the species (and there aren't many) had little to go on aside from a hind limb here, a few teeth there. No scientist in history has ever seen it alive.

But, in a study published Tuesday in the journal PeerJ, Fernandez, Seiffert and their colleagues describe the capture of three freshly killed *Z. insignis* specimens. The discovery means that, for the first time, scientists were able to examine the genome of one of the bizarre mammals, and finally figure out where *Zenkerella* fits in our evolutionary family tree.

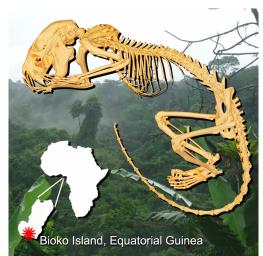
[New Yorkers don't know their rats well enough. One 'rodentologist' wants to change that.]

Members of the Zenkerella genus are creatures of another world, "living fossils" that have evolved very little over the past 49 million years. For context, they're only about 15 million years younger than the dinosaurs, and some 35 million years older than the oldest great apes. When they first arose, Australia was still connected to Antarctica, and the Himalayas didn't even exist yet.

"It's a long lineage that stretches all the way back 50 million years, and we only have one species left that we don't know anything about," Seiffert said. "We don't know when it is active, or what it eats, or if it spends all of its time in the trees or on the ground."

The

That's pretty much unprecedented for mammals, which are among the best-researched taxonomic classes of creatures.



An illustration of a Zenkerella skeleton and map of Bioko Island are superimposed against an image of the rain forest where the Zenkerella specimens were found. (Erik Seiffert)

Much of what is known about the *Zenkerella* genus comes from the fossil record — which is how Seiffert, a paleontologist at University of Southern California, became one of the world's only specialists on the creatures. Fifteen years ago, while working on a dig in Egypt's Faiyum Basin, he and his colleagues uncovered the fossilized remains of a now-extinct *Zenkerella* cousin. Examining the arm and leg bones of the 37-million-year old creature, he realized, "we know more about this species than we know about something that is alive today running around in the forest."

Seiffert was certain that the living *Zenkerellas* could tell scientists a great deal about rodent evolution, not to mention the changes that have taken place in Africa in the past 50 million years. But first, he would have to find one.

So he reached out to Fernandez, who was then the director of a wildlife center run by the Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program. Fernandez is a

conservation biologist and lecturer at the University of the West of England, but he'd never even heard of *Zenkerella* before. When he spoke to friends and colleagues in the community, most of them hadn't heard of it either.

But Seiffert told him that *Zenkerella* specimens had been spotted on Bioko before, so Fernandez showed his neighbors a picture of the funny little creature and asked them to keep an eye out for it. Most of the island's residents are subsistence hunters, and it seemed likely that, eventually, someone would catch a *Zenkerella* in one of their traps.

Weeks passed. Then months. Finally, almost a year after he made his initial request, Fernandez got a call from a colleague. "They said, 'We got one of your guys,'" he recalled. "I took a look, and it was one of them."

[Did the death of the dinosaurs allow meek mammals to thrive? Not exactly.]

The living *Zenkerella* looks almost like the reconstructions of its long-dead ancestors envisioned by paleontologists. It is a squirrel-y creature with fluffy black fur, including a poof of a tail. But beneath all that hair, the base of the tail is covered in scales.

It lacks the parachute-like membrane found in its close cousins, the "gliders" Anomalure (also known as scaly tailed squirrels) and *Idiurus*, leading scientists to wonder whether *Zenkerella* had somehow lost its ability to fly during its evolution.

"Which would be strange because it would be the loss of a complex anatomical adaptation," Seiffert said.

But he and his colleagues determined that *Zenkerella* is actually a member of a separate taxonomic family, indicating that the flight membrane evolved after the group branched off into its own lineage. The finding supports a growing consensus that advanced adaptations such as flying, swimming and gliding, once acquired, are unlikely to be reversed over the course of evolution.

[New monkey fossils suggest the primates made a wild migration across the sea]

Indeed, *Zenkerella* is the ultimate survivor. Of the 5,400 mammal species known to science, only it and five others are the sole surviving members of ancient lineages. Even among that select group, *Zenkerella's* living fossil status makes it almost unique. But it is the least studied of all these ancient creatures.

That's bad news for *Zenkerella*, whose habitat in Central Africa is under threat from deforestation and development. Since scientists have never seen the animal alive in the wild, they're not entirely sure where they

live, or how many of them there are left. The utter lack of information has lead the International Union for Conservation of Nature to designate *Z. insignis* a "species of least concern."

"These small obscure animals, they're not getting the attention they would actually need to confirm their distribution," Seiffert said. We don't know for certain that *Zenkerella* is threatened, but we don't know that it isn't, either. "When more work is done, we could easily find that is the case."

For now, Seiffert, Fernandez and their colleagues are hoping to sequence the genome of their three specimens to understand the genetic roots of their strange and ancient traits. They're analyzing the animals' gut contents, which will help researchers understand what they eat — and hopefully track down where they live. After all those years looking at fossils, Seiffert holds out hope that he might yet see a *Zenkerella* in action, a living ghost of the ancient world.

"It really is one of those pretty incredible examples of discovery," Seiffert said, "and a sign of the kinds of discoveries that can still be made."

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Meet the 'blue whirl,' the newest form of fire

mnn.com

Researchers say the beautiful new flame, inspired by fire tornadoes, may provide an eco-friendly way to clean up oil spills.

Michael d'Estries

August 9, 2016, 3:11 p.m.



University of Maryland researchers discovered the new 'blue whirl' flame after studying the formation of fire tomadoes. (Photo: University of Maryland)

Researchers from the University of Maryland who were studying fire tornadoes have inadvertently discovered a new kind of flame. Called a "blue whirl," the unique vortex fire is detailed in a paper published in the current issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

"A fire tornado has long been seen as this incredibly scary, destructive thing. But, like electricity, can you harness it for good? If we can understand it, then maybe we can control and use it," Michael Gollner,

an assistant professor of engineering who co-authored the paper, said in a release.

The team stumbled upon the blue whirl after generating a lab-controlled fire tornado over water. While traditional fire whirls are generally extremely turbulent and bright red or orange, the water-based version exhibited an intense blue color and strong stability.

"Blue in the whirl indicates there is enough oxygen for complete combustion, which means less or no soot, and is therefore a cleaner burn," engineering professor and co-author Elaine Oran said.

Such an efficient, soot-free flame could offer an eco-friendly way to deal with oil spills. Traditional methods usually involve burning the oil on the surface of the water, generating harmful emissions. If a blue whirl could be replicated on a large scale, it could burn the oil at a more efficient and cleaner rate.

"Further understanding of the complex, multiphase physics occurring during blue-whirl combustion offers exciting possibilities for the future," the researchers write, "and may therefore lead to the development of novel methods for fuel-spill remediation and high-efficiency combustion."

You can see an example of the University of Maryland blue whirl phenomena in the video below.

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Winds whip up firenados out of Oregon field fire

August 16, 2016 yahoo.com

CORNELIUS, Ore. (AP) — A small fire on an Oregon farmer's field whipped up several firenados tornados comprised of flames and smoke.

The smoky twisters cropped up in the field after a piece of farming equipment on Friday sparked the fire, which ultimately burned about 7 acres.

Cornelius Fire Department spokesman Matt Johnston said erratic winds contributed to the flaming phenomenon. He said the fire sucks in oxygen to fuel itself and the heat rises, causing the spinning column of flames and smoke.

Johnston filmed one in an adjacent field that swirled for about two minutes and shot up about 200

While Oregon has had a tame wildfire season so far, Johnston said three days of expected triple digit heat has crews worried.

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The Telegraph All sections

News



Fire-starting 'super ant' that is drawn to electrics is spreading across the UK, experts warn



The invasive ants are attracted to electricity CREDIT: PA

By Cristina Criddle

27 JULY 2016 • 8:14AM

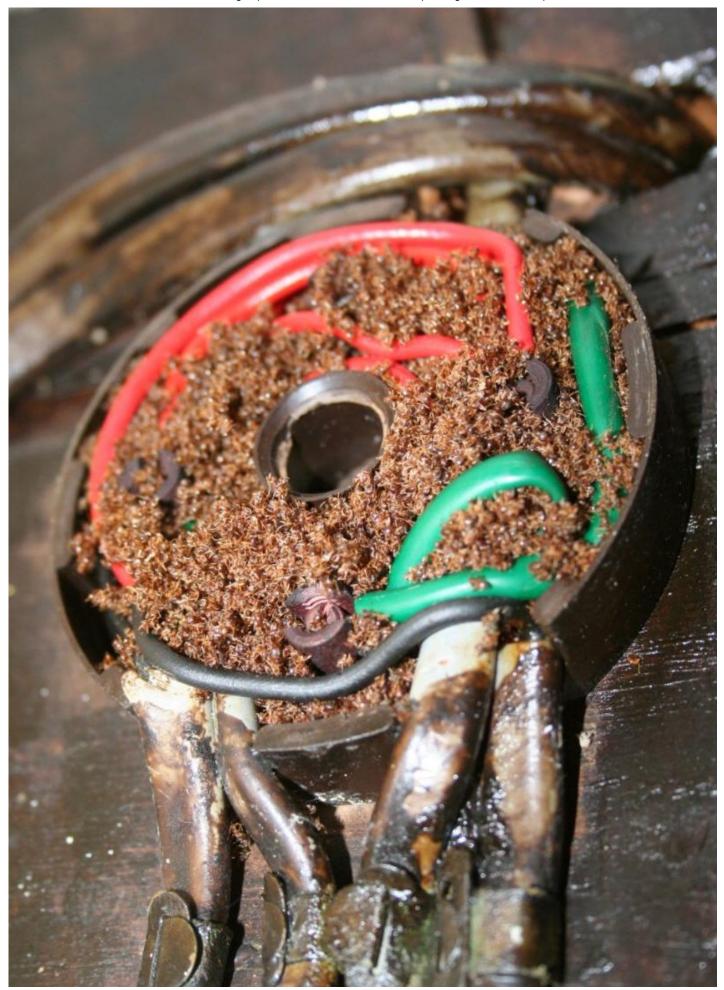
A n Asian super-ant that forms colonies of millions and can cause fires due to its fatal attraction to electricity is spreading across the country, experts warn.

The species, Lasius Neglectus, thrives in gardens and greenhouses and has invaded homes from Yorkshire to Sussex.

The super ant - also known as 'the fire ant' because it is attracted to power sockets and cables, sparking blackouts and fires - was first identified in Britain in 2009 at a National

Trust manor in Gloucestershire, where more than 35,000 were found.

The insect looks the same as a common black garden ant but the number of workers in a colony is between 10 and 100 times greater. It is native to Turkey but has been a growing problem across Europe, living interconnected nests that can span 50 acres.





A colony of 35,00 ants were found in a fuse box in Hidcote Manor Gardens, Gloucestershire in 2009 CREDIT: THE NATIONAL TRUST

Last spotted in 2014 in London and Cambridgeshire, there have been three reported infestations this year, one in north Yorkshire and two near Eastborne.

In response, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs commissioned a report into the ant's potential spread, with options for control and eradication.

The University of York, who worked on the risk assessment for the Government, estimated the super ants cost the UK £1.7billion every year through damage and management costs.

Phillip Buckham-Bonnett, one of the scientists on the project, said the species is smaller than British ants (3-6mm) but more aggressive, and has the potential to drive out native garden ants, with implications on other insect lifecycles and the UK ecology.

"A particularly persistent invasion of ants in a residential building is certainly worth investigating," he added.

Ant Colony Keeps Busy Clearing Trails 00:56

The super ant could also encourage an increase in <u>greenflies</u> as it feeds on a sugary liquid excreted by greenflies and other aphids. The ant farms the aphids which encourages growth.

Dr Elva Robinson, a lecturer in ecology at the University of York, said: "We think the invasive ants have the potential to have a big impact on the native ecosystem. In the sites we have studied, it is clear they are excluding the native ants.

"They are clearly dominating, and where they cluster, native species are being pushed out."

The ant rarely flies so it is feared the ant is being transported on plants and soil.

Dr Robinson added:

"Apart from being slightly smaller, the invasive garden ant looks a lot like our common native garden ant so they can be difficult to recognise. These new ants are not aggressive, they do not sting and they pose no harm to humans beyond people finding it unpleasant to have an infestation."

About | The Super Ant



PΑ

Name: Lasius Neglectus

Size: 3-6mm

Colony size: The species can form 'super-colonies' of interconnected nests spanning up to 50 acres. In the UK the largest recorded is 35,000 but a colony in Spain had 112 million workers.

Threat: More aggressive than the common garden ant they can win in competitions for food and space.

Habitat: They dwell in gardens and greenhouses and are attracted to electricity. They can survive in temperatures as low as -5C.

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Scientists Create Successful Biohybrid Being Using 3-D Printing and Genetic Engineering

inc.com

Scientists genetically engineered and 3-D-printed a biohybrid being, opening the door further for lifelike robots and artificial intelligence.

By Lisa Calhoun



CREDIT: Getty Images

If you met this labcreated critter over your beach vacation, you'd swear you saw a baby ray. In fact, the tiny, flexible swimmer is the product of a team of

diverse scientists. They have built the most successful artificial animal yet. This disruptive technology opens the door much wider for lifelike robots and artificial intelligence.

Like most disruption, it started with a simple idea. Kit Kevin Parker, PhD, a Harvard professor researching how to build a human heart, saw his daughter entranced by watching stingrays at the New England Aquarium in Boston. He wondered if he could engineer a muscle that could move in the same sinuous, undulating fashion. The quest for a material led to creating an artificial ray with a 3-D-printed rubber body at the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at Harvard. Scientists from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the University of Michigan, and Stanford University's Medical Center joined the team.

They reinforced the soft rubber body with a 3-D-printed gold skeleton so thin it functions like cartilage. Geneticists adapted rat heart cells so they could respond to light by contracting. Then, they were grown in a carefully arranged pattern on the rubber and around the gold skeleton.

The muscular circuitry is one of the most interesting parts of the research, and there's more about it in this video:

The birth of biohybrid beings

The new engineered animal responds to light so well scientists were able to guide it through an obstacle course 15 times its length using strong and weak light pulses.

The study authors write, "Our ray outperformed existing locomotive biohybrid systems in terms of speed, distance traveled, and durability (six days), demonstrating the potential of self-propelled, phototactically activated tissue-engineered robots."

What biohybrid mean for robots and artificial intelligence

Science of this type is fundamental for engineering special-purpose creations such as artificial worms that sniff out and eat cancer. Or bionic body parts for those who have suffered accidents or

disease. Imagine having little swimmers in your system that rush to the site of a medical emergency such as a stroke. The promise of sensor-rich soft tissue frees robots to move more easily and yet not be cut off from needed input. Sensitized robot soft tissue could perform without the energy-sucking heaviness of metal or the artificial barrier of hard-plastic exoskeletons.

Thanks to disruptive, cross-disciplinary applied science like this, entrepreneurs in the next few years will be able to play on the border of what life is, what alive means, and what life can be. Expect to see companies use biohybrid beings to commercialize applications that solve some of the largest, and most lucrative, challenges we face today.

The opinions expressed here by Inc.com columnists are their own, not those of Inc.com.

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Couple Spends 24 Years Building A Floating Home In Canada With No Power Tools

littlethings.com

Lina Batarags

For anyone who has ever dreamt of going off the grid, this floating home in the Canadian wilderness may truly be the stuff of dreams.

Artists Catherine King and Wayne Adams have been building the home for 24 years, and what they've created is a masterpiece of colors and imagination.

Viewed from above, fuschia and and teal tones make the home pop out from its surroundings; inside, it's a peaceful home with a rustic kitchen and greenish-blue toned walls.

Weighing in at a whopping 500 tons, the home is a complex of sorts. It features a main living house, a dance floor, a lighthouse, and four greenhouses.

And that weight is made all the more mind-blowing when you consider that it's not anchored down. It's only tied to shore.

There's no road access to the home, which is off the coast of Vancouver Island. As Adams puts it, "The water is our highway."

When it comes to feeding themselves, the couple has no difficulty in being totally self-sustaining.

Between the crops grown in their greenhouses and the surrounding waters, in which Adams says it takes no more than 10 minutes to catch a fish on any given day, this couple has built themselves a true, isolated paradise.

For a more compact take on a similar concept, take a look at this modern floating home and this stunning rustic houseboat with hand-built furniture.

What do you think — is this a lifestyle you could see yourself transitioning to?

Let us know in the comments, and please SHARE with your friends and family!

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Oldest floating US post office scrapes rock, runs aground

yahoo.com

August 26, 2016

MEREDITH, N.H. (AP) — Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night could stop a U.S. mail boat — and then it ran aground in New Hampshire.

The U.S. Mail Boat Sophie C. is the oldest floating post office in the United States. Officials say it ran aground Friday in Lake Winnipesaukee. They say it scraped a rock near Loon Island and was stuck briefly but didn't suffer major damage.

WMUR-TV (http://bit.ly/2bWsdmm) reports three passengers were safely removed from the combination tour boat and U.S. Postal Service mail boat.

The Bureau of Marine Patrol has warned boaters of potentially low water levels in parts of the state as drought conditions persist.

The Sophie C. has been providing mail service since 1892 and visits five islands daily from June through mid-September. Passengers can fill out Sophie C. postcards and mail them onboard.

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Florida man survives lightning strike, spider, snake bites

stltoday.com

- The Associated Press
- 18 hrs ago

LAKELAND, Fla. • Lightning, a spider and now a snake. A central Florida man is proving to be a survivor.

In the last four years, 31-year-old Kyle Cook has been struck by lightning, bitten by a venomous spider and — most recently — attacked by an Eastern diamondback rattlesnake in his backyard in Lakeland.

His father, Mike Cook, calls his son "a walking Murphy's law."

The younger Cook was almost finished mowing the yard at his family's rented house on Aug. 11 when he heard a loud rattling sound. He saw the 5-foot snake about 3 feet away. As he moved back, he stepped on a stick. He says the noise provoked the snake, which struck him.

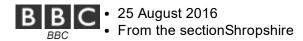
The Ledger reports the fang marks are still visible two weeks later on Cook's right ankle.

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Shrewsbury Folk Festival bans 'blackface' Morris dancers - BBC News

bbc.com



http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-shropshire-37172500



A member of the public contacted an equality group over concerns that blacked-up Morris dancers could cause racial offence

A folk festival has banned Morris dancers in black face make-up after it received complaints they could cause racial offence.

Shrewsbury Folk Festival bosses said dancers wearing full black face paint would not be booked from next year.

But the organisers said there were "no racial connotations" and they had "never wanted to upset people."

Fairness, Respect, Equality Shropshire (Fresh) said the ban showed sensitivity "to a changed social climate".

The weekend's event will be the last where Morris dancers will be allowed to showcase the 500-year-old custom of covering their faces with black make-up.

But the festival's organisers said it was "a national issue that should not be focused solely on the Shrewsbury Folk Festival".

More Shropshire stories

Reactions from BBC Radio Shropshire listeners

Adrian Pitt: "I am disappointed that the organisers are not prepared to tolerate my traditional disguise, which has nothing to do with mimicry of any racial group and doesn't even look like any particular racial group, the evidence of which goes back centuries."

Liz Weaver: "I don't think some of you are quite understanding the offensiveness of the blacked-up face. This singing and minstrel costume is depicting Uncle Tom. A black man who used to perform for white people. The implication that Uncle Tom was complicit in his own slavery is where the offence comes in."

Jon Roads: "It's terrible that PC nonsense is being used to repress our traditional customs in this way. These ancient traditions are at risk of dying out completely. Just disgusting."

Richard Day: "Just because we have done something for a long time does not necessarily mean we should continue it unless you want to bring back the burning of witches maybe?"

Joseph Bond: "Has everyone missed the irony that all those complaining and bemoaning this progressive decision are white? It's also interesting that most of you mourning your traditions are too stubborn to breathe life into them in order to help them survive."

Have your say on the BBC Radio Shropshire Facebook page.

Image caption

Jonathan Hyams from Fresh said the group had contacted festival organisers after a complaint from a member of the public.

The groups had met to discuss the issue and Fresh suggested the dancers use another colour of face paint or patterned make-up instead.



Morris dancers in Shrewsbury's square

Image copyright Shrewsbury Folk Festival Image caption

Sandra Surtees, from the festival, said: "We are somewhat caught in the middle - we've been contacted by an organisation that's asked us not to book them, and we've been contacted by a group upset because we've not booked them.

"But we recognise that times have changed. We're happy to change our policy."

From 2017, "you will still see black

make-up on Morris dancers but not [on the] the full face," she said.

She said two of the three Morris groups booked for this year's festival had "already moved away from wearing full face black make up of their own volition".

One interpretation of the tradition is that it started when begging was illegal, when people would conceal their faces to avoid being recognised, she said.

The most notorious version of the 'Blackface' was used in the United States from minstrel shows of the early 19th century, in which actors caricatured and mocked black slaves.

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Silent Sisters: Caring for the dead in gendered religious space

deadmaidens.com

Posted on 18/07/2016 by deadmaidens

Nuri McBride is a Metaheret, which means washing and ritually preparing the dead in the Jewish traditions, as well as assisting in funeral preparation and bereavement. As a member of a Chevras you provide kosher body preparation, funeral services, bereavement support, and palliative care, free of charge as a community service. With women outnumbering men in Chevras 2 to 1, Nuri addresses the issues and restrictions of practicing this sacred duty in a highly gendered space.



'Young Woman in Synagogue' by Isidor Kaufmann

Nuri McBride –

Beyond her calling as a Metaheret, Nuri is in the last year of her J.D, works in the non-profit sector, is an avid niche perfume collector and olfaction nerd, and blogs about the intersection of death customs and scent over at Death, Scent, & The Live Girl



'Young Woman in Synagogue' by Isidor Kaufmann

"So I heard if the dead have tattoos you scrape them off with a cheese grater or they can't be buried in a Jewish cemetery"

"Is it true that you put dirt from their homeland in the coffins like Dracula?"

"What do you mean you don't get paid to do bury people?"

These are the most common questions I receive when people find out I am a member of a Chevra Kadisha (lit. Sacred Society), aka a Jewish burial society, which is as mystifying an organisation to most English speaking

Jews as it is to outsiders. By the way, the answers to the above questions are, yes you can be buried in a Jewish cemetery with a tattoo we don't cut them off, sometimes, and no, it's against my religion.

I am a Metaheret, which means I wash and ritually prepare the dead in the Jewish traditions, as well as assist in funeral preparation and bereavement. Chevras are volunteer burial societies that exist in Jewish communities around the world and provide kosher body preparation, funeral services, bereavement support, and palliative care, free of charge as a community service. The modern incarnation of the Chevra began in the 14th century but the basic rituals are much older. Though each local burial society has their own personality and history, Chevras in general, have been pillars in Diaspora communities alongside the mikva (ritual bath), synagogue, and rabbi.

Far from the creepy stereotype of the undertaker, it is considered an honour and a sacred duty to be a Metaheret. Women outnumber men in Chevras in the English speaking world 2 to 1. For female members, it is a rare public position of religious responsibility that is universally respected across denominations. For our male Metaherim (m. plural), however, the goodwill created by our sacred society can translate into social mobility, which is not shared equally with their female counterparts. Women are rarely on advisory boards or become Chevra president. These positions historically have led to leadership in other Jewish institutions. While Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox women theoretically can join a Chevra, I have never in 15 years met a Reform Metaheret, though I do hear tell they exist. The vast majority of women that prepare the dead in Judaism come from the more observant streams where community bias against women in pronounced. This matters even for people outside of Orthodoxy because 65% of the Jewish population worldwide uses some kind of Chevra Kadisha service during their burial. It is the only readily accessible service available to Jews in Israel. In Europe

and North America, even in many liberal communities, often Orthodox women (being held to strict Orthodox rules) come in to provide these functions for liberal for-profit funeral home. These rules, by the way, had their last major reform in the 16th century. The 16th century wasn't the best time to be a woman.

So much of Jewish burial practices are about the equalising nature of death and the humanity of the dead, yet the practice of preparing the dead is extremely gendered and unequal in traditional Judaism. Metaherot (f. plural), especially younger and more liberal Metaherot, are questioning our roles in Jewish death and society as well as what we can do to shape these traditions towards a more egalitarian future without losing our identity. I don't have a lot of answers; however, as a former Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) that left strict observance, yet still operates as a Metaheret, I get to walk between the 16th and 21st centuries fairly regularly. In places like Brooklyn, Silver Springs, Gateshead, or Bnei Brak, the difference between a modern metropolitan hub and the shtetl is about two blocks, yet rarely do they cross paths.

Kosher Burial 101

There are for-profit funeral homes and cemeteries geared towards the Jewish community, especially in the US. However, Jewish law dictates that no material benefit can be accrued from the dead and there are Talmudic decrees for simple minimalistic funerals in the name of equality. Also ideally, one would be buried by sunset on the day of death, leaving little time for preparation. Due to these constraints, the commercialization of burial practices and the development of a secular consumer business model did not gain significant traction in Jewish communities until fairly recently and are very controversial. In Judaism our preparation is very simple. As a Metaheret, I have five main responsibilities to the dead which are general lumped together and called Taharah but include:

Sh'mirah: Vigil-keeping from the time of death until burial Rehitzah: Washing the body to remove dirt and foreign matter Taharah: Ritual purification of the body with flowing water Halbashah: Dressing the body in takhrikhim (shrouds)

Hashkavah: Placing the dead in a coffin or preferably in the grave without one

Beyond this, our work is focused on the living, assisting the family with the funeral and shiva (mourning).

While I have my share of criticism, overall I love our custom. It is simple, dignified, communal, and economically egalitarian. When it comes to how we treat the dead it's with the utmost sensitivity and consideration. We don't apply makeup or dress the dead in clothes because to do so would be mimicking life and a denial of the reality of death. We do not practice embalming nor do we drain the body. For us, being at peace requires the decomposition of one's whole being into the earth. Traditionally coffins won't even use metal closures as metal is symbolic of tools and weapons which do not represent rest and peace.

Once you are in the care of the Chevra Kadisha we will always use your name, you will always be a person, you will never be an object. If death is expected, we can meet with you and your family ahead of time as part of your end of life care. Once you die you will never be left alone, not even during an autopsy. We will make sure every bit of you is in that grave. I know ZAKA volunteers in Israel that have spent 24 hours after a suicide bombing on their hands and knees in blood making sure every fragment of bone was accounted for and received a proper burial.

A three-person Taharah team will work in silence (accept for softly whispered prayers), with intense concentration, as they meticulous prepare your body. At the end, they pray for your forgiveness if they have offended you in their preparation. If your family is having trouble procuring things we don't traditionally cover like burial plots, and headstones we will do whatever we can to help. When your family is grieving we can be there as much or as little as they need. If you die without family to mourn you, we will conduct your funeral and be your mourners and consider it a great honour.

Women in the Chevra

Now here's the rub, Jewish culture is deeply gendered. It's present in our language which genders even abstract concepts and numbers. It's present in our traditional society. Jewish culture's basic social unit is the heteronormative family, not the individual. Unlike Western cultures, Semitic cultures are profoundly uncomfortable with the individual. While it is uncomfortable with a male individual too, it is supremely uncomfortable with a single adult female individual. Enormous portions of Jewish law are devoted to the regulation of female behaviour sometimes rather arbitrarily or for the catch-all reason of modesty.

Therefore in my role as a death care provider, because I am a woman, I cannot fill containers or pour water in the Taharah ritual if I am niddah. Burial shrouds are traditionally made by postmenopausal women also for issues of possible ritual contamination due to menstruation. Which begs the question, what on Earth do you think happens during a period? It also means I have to discuss my period in a coded, roundabout, fashion with my fellow Chevra members on a near monthly basis. Some burial societies will not allow single women or married women that have not had a child to be a Metaheret. I cannot perform my duties at all if I am pregnant because of the superstitions that a Dybbuk might possess my baby. I repeatedly reminded a former Chevra leader of mine that a Dybbuk is an Ashkenazi folktale with no basis in our religion or reality and as a Sephardic person it is completely foreign to me. I was met with the brick wall that ends most arguments in Judaism, "It is our tradition. It is how our forefather did it so it is how we do it. End of story."

Most mortuary technicians have to wear special garb for health reasons. Along with gloves, apron, and face mask, I have to wear a skirt below my knees and ensure my elbows, collarbone, and hair is covered even if I am working in a closed, all female, environment because to do otherwise would be immodest.

I'm not allowed to be a pallbearer, only male burial society members can. Male members, however, are not authorised to sit vigils for female corpses. Yet, women can sit vigil for both male and female dead. As a female, I can only perform the Taharah on women, that is, unless a male burial society member isn't available and then I can serve a man. However, under no circumstances can it be reversed, even if it means delaying the funeral. The immediate assumption of impropriety or sexualization on the part of a man, but not a woman, is belittling to everyone and leaves the Metaherot doing more than their fair share.

Corpse Modesty

Then there is the issue of corpse modesty. Modesty in this sense is the desexualizing and policing of the female form. In life, Haredi and Modern Orthodox women and girls are conditioned to regulate theirs and other's bodies for modesty constantly; if they don't, they risk random men walking down the street doing it for them. It is taken as fact that men cannot control their lust for sweet lady flesh, and it is women's responsibility to keep them from sinning. As such, modesty has become a community obsession, with rabbis issuing edicts on the age in which a girl should start covering her legs (6 years old) as well as the density and colour of their tights (opaque and beige). This sexual policing does not end when a woman dies. Instead, the role of modesty protector for the sake of male virtue falls to her Metaherot.

I was once called in to meet with the family of a 98-year-old Holocaust survivor. It was three days before she would pass, she was in hospice and unresponsive. Of all the questions her sons could have asked me at our first meeting, they focused on making sure it would be me that removed her IV and feeding tube once she died because her primary nurse was male. While it was tolerable that she was touched by him in life for medical care, at death the removal of her IV drifted into lascivious territory or possible desecration of the dead. All I could think was, "Really, this is your first question? Your mother survived Buchenwald and you think the nice nurse removing her IV will harm her spirit or turn him into a lust monster?"

Yet, this is where the sexual politics of Jewish death gets a bit difficult to navigate. I want to respect the personal wishes of the dead. Many of the women on my table have never been touched by a man other than their husband or a doctor. If they thought about their purification at all they thought about it as a sacred female space, three living daughters of Israel bringing their sister to peace. A man participating would be a violation of that sisterhood. There is power in female solidarity and shared ritual. However, does it have the same weight if our seclusion is mandatory? Is it just a coping strategy? Are they actually letting me perform this function out of respect for the feminine half of divinity, or is it because they don't want to touch dead women, or because they

assume men will have sex with dead women? The answer is in the question itself, *they* are letting *me*, *they* have the power over *me*.

On the 7th of Adar (the anniversary of Moses' death), all the Chevras fast in atonement for any disrespect we may have inadvertently shown the dead. In the evening when we break the fast there is a banquet in our honour and the Chevra president holds a lecture to refresh us on Jewish laws regarding burial. It's hard not to feel like a second class citizen when you are at a party supposedly in your honour, and there is still a sign in the lecture hall saying, WOMEN TO THE BACK. By back they mean that extra row of lawn chairs hastily lined up behind a curtain so that the even the Chevra president can't see you and everyone can pretend you don't exist. They talk about the brotherhood of those that bury the dead and the fraternal order, all I can think is, "We have always been here."

We've Always Been Here

No custom is static, even old ones change. Before the destruction of the Second Temple, Jews buried their dead in caves or rock-cut tombs. The vigil began before burial and didn't end until three days afterwards to insure the person was indeed dead and the tomb properly sealed. Preparation of the dead was done only by women, who were also professional mourners, stirring up emotion with their laments. On the first anniversary of a loved one's death, the bones would be collected and meticulously arranged into stone ossuaries for reburial. The earliest ossuaries go back to the Chalcolithic era, but after 135 C.E they stopped being used, customs change.

Little is known specifically about the burial customs of Jewish women between then and the 14th century. Most are not named in historical records. If they are it is only concerning their husband, father, or son. Women worked in Chevras at least as far back as the 15th century and probably further back. Women also probably tended to their dead at home. Graveyards in Germany and Spain have been found with separate male and female sections both having distinctive styles leading scholars to believe they may have had separate Chevra Kadishas for women or that women had more autonomy in female burial at the time. After all, Jewish women were extremely active in business both in Medieval Sephardic and Ashkenazi societies and had a high degree of economic independence.

In the late 17th century Nashim Zadkaniyyot (Pious Women) societies formed in Europe, completely removed women from the care of the Chevra Kadisha. Nashim Zadkaniyyot were all female organisation that provided all of the services of the Chevra, but also did other charitable works like feed the poor, foster orphans and fund hospitals. Sadly, the Nashim Zadkaniyyot disbanded or were subsumed back into the Chevra Kadishas over time.

Traditions That Don't Grow, Die

Critics could say sexism is part of Orthodoxy and if I don't like it go elsewhere. To which I ask, where? Rarely are Chevras set up by Reform or Conservative congregations. These communities, at least in the US and the UK, instead patron all-inclusive funeral homes that provide these services for a profit. Some of these funeral homes are amazing, working with Chevras when they can, and facilitating choices that wouldn't be allowed in Orthodoxy, like cremation, but still provide Jewish elements to the funeral. Still, I feel many prey on a lack of understanding and fear of exclusion from Orthodox institutions. That fear isn't completely unfound. Orthodox congregations often exclude less observant streams of Judaism from many things like private mikvas and kosher certifications, but to deny a proper burial to anyone is a major sin and that is what we are doing when we gate-keep on death issues and keep women from leadership.

An example; several years ago I volunteered with a Chevra that worked closely with a now defunct funeral home in Florida. The funeral home catered to the Reform community. One day I was called to fill in for another Metaheret that had taken care of the body that afternoon but couldn't stay for the vigil. I agreed to help out and as I arrived I was met by a tearful and harried woman, the deceased's daughter, in the car park. Before I could say more than my name and I'm sorry for your loss, she leaned in and in an embarrassed whisper said, "Would it be ok if I tipped you all in cash next week? I'm so sorry, it's just a little tight right now." I was confused. She

proceeded to tell me that the funeral home bill included: Transportation to the Facility \$200, Preparing the Body \$1800, Shroud \$300, Coffin \$900, Gratuity for Preparation and Shomer (vigil) Staff: \$100+. She burst into tear when I told her we asked the funeral home for our standard donation per person \$120: \$20 for gas, \$35 for the shroud, and \$65 for the coffin (the cost of materials). We don't charge for Taharah, our labour or accept tips. If she had come directly to us, we would have never discussed a donation. When I asked her why she didn't reach out to the Chevra even to just do some parts, she said that the only Chevra members she had ever seen were Orthodox men. She was Reform and there was no Reform Chevra in town, she had no idea a Chevra Kadisha would work with a Reform funeral home. Her most notable recent experience with Orthodox society occurred on vacation in Israel. She had been to the Mea She'arim neighborhood in Jerusalem and seen a crowd of religious men spitting on female tourists and calling them whores for coming into their neighborhood dressed in tee shirts and shorts. Her mother had wanted a relatively Jewish funeral but her family didn't know how to fulfill that wish. From her daughter's perspective, it was go with the austere looking fellows with the beards that might spit on me that I know next to nothing about, or this friendly gentleman with a website that will bury my mom for \$10,000 and says it's a barging.

This is why I choose to stay and fight for access and inclusion from the inside. I want people to know their options and families to feel involved. I don't want to see our beautiful traditions become a line item on a spreadsheet. I don't want to see families go into debt because they have to bury their dead. I don't want Jews that don't fit a mould be made to feel afraid to claim their customs which are their birthrights. Many Reform and Conservative synagogues in the US and UK want to rekindling Chevra Kadishas and they are going to need allies willing to teach the foundation of customs that have become lost to them. I don't want to simply opt-out and allow an unfair system to go unchallenged. As Death Positivity and Natural Death advocacy grows, we have centuries of knowledge to share with other communities and might even learn a thing or two ourselves. All of this, however, means facing some hard truths about death and gender in Judaism.

I know there will be those that say, "Well in my Chevra..." and that's valid. Judaism is not a monolith, local custom and affiliation may soften or eradicate some of the effects that I've discussed. Yet, when I speak to other Metaherot from around the world, I see the struggles of female death care practitioners echoing many of the struggles women are facing throughout Jewish society.

In June 2016, Nishma Research released the first large-scale survey of those that choose to leave Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox Judaism. Most felt they were pushed out instead of lured away by the bright lights of secularism. The number one reason for leaving listed by both women and men was the treatment of women in Orthodox society. 37% of women said it was their only or primary reason. It was central to my own defection.

Times change, and customs that don't learn to balance tradition with the reality of modern life will cease being relevant and die off. Even in the most isolated of Haredi communities women are starting to speak up. Orthodox Feminism is growing and Metaherot are in a unique position to be leaders for positive change in our communities. Despite every effort to cut us off from modern society, we know that other women have the right to divorce their husbands. We are aware there is no reason why we can't touch a Torah scroll. We are aware having eight kids in ten years while living below the poverty line isn't a blessing. We know other death professionals do not have to sit behind a curtain at a conference. We are aware that when you shrug and say, "Don't worry, G-d will provide", the manifestation of G-d you are speaking about is a woman's back, and we don't want to be silent anymore.

I am interested in bridging the dialogue between women working in the commercial death industry and women working in the religious or traditional death sphere.

What challenges do you face?

How do you balance tradition and modern ethics?

3 thoughts on "Silent Sisters: Caring for the dead in gendered religious space"

- 1. Pingback: July Ephemera: Witches, Britches, & Bad Bitches Death, Scent, & the Live Girl
- 2. Pingback: Links Of The Dead {July 2016} | Unquiet Things
- 3. Michael Slater says:



'Young Woman in Synagogue' by Isidor Kaufmann

16/08/2016 at 19:03

Great post. There are many of us, men and women, from many streams of Judaism in the US, Canada, and even the UK, Puerto Rico and Israel who share your concerns about preserving beautiful traditions and treating people with respect. We want all people treated with respect in life and death, and we want those who mourn to be comforted. Check out the work of Kavod v'Nichum (Honor and Comfort, http://www.Jewish-funerals.org) and its training prorgam, The Gamliel Institute. I'd be interested in feedback on a talk I recorded, related issues—http://bit.ly/2bovISp

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Georgiana Houghton: Spirit Drawings review - awe-inspiring visions of a Victorian medium

Wednesday 15 June 2016 Last modified on Wednesday 15 June 2016

the

Georgiana Houghton: Spirit Drawings review - awe-inspiring visions of a Victorian medium

Courtauld Gallery, London All-seeing eyes and cosmic visions dazzle in the abstract art of a woman who claimed her hand was guided by the dead, from holy saints to fam-



Detail of The Portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ, 8 Dec 1862 by Georgiana Houghton. Photograph: Courtauld/Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia 'Out of time' ... The Eye of the Lord (1 Sept 1870) by Georgiana Houghton. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia Georgiana Houghton, c.1882, Photograph: Sivu Chen Lewis/Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia Reminiscent of Blake ... the back of Houghton's work The Eye of the Lord. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia 'Some holy fire' ... The Eye of God (25 Sept 1862) – the inscription on the reverse names Correggio as Houghton's spirit guide. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia

The eye of God stares out of a swirling storm of line and colour, like the eye of a whale seen through turbulent oceanic depth: inspiring. The abstract art of Georgiana Houghton summons up strange powers of the imagination that stir deep regions of th labyrinths of red and gold, purple and brown can be joyous and ecstatic, oppressive and eerie, but always they are tremulous and completely out of time.



Spiritualist artist Georgiana Houghton gets UK exhibit

Overlooked painter is becoming recognised as being deca abstract pioneers such as Wassily Kandinsky

Houghton is arguably the first ever abstract artist. In 1871, before the famous impressionists exhibition was held in Pa staged an exhibition of her almost entirely non-figurative w in London. Her visionary art fascinated, provoked and imp Victorian public. So why was she completely forgotten and show - first seen in Australia and now at the Courtauld - h exhibition in a public art gallery?

One reason is that she was a woman in a world that only s genius in men. Another is that she never claimed to be the her art anyway. Houghton was a medium. She worked at t

the Victorian craze for spiritualism, communicating with the dead at her seances. Not only did the dear departed speak to her

her hand when she drew. All her cosmic designs are spirit drawings, made by the hand of Georgiana Houghton yet created by the spirits of the dead working through her.



Houghton. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union Melbourne, Australia Georgiana Houghton, c.1882. Photograph: Sivu Chen Lewis/Victorian Spiritualists' Union Melbourne, Australia Reminiscent of Blake ... the back of Houghton's work The Eye of the Lord. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia 'Some holy fire' ... The Eye of God (25 Sept 1862) – the inscription on the reverse names Correggio as Houghton's spirit guide. Photograph. Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melboume, Australia

This woman was a genius who could only create and show her art by attributing it to dead white males

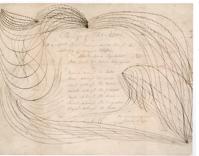
Shut into the gallery alone to review the exhibition, I suddenly feel uneasy. So many ghosts. The supernatural origin of Hough drawings is carefully explained on the reverse of each chromatic starburst, in illustrated annotations reminiscent of William Bla claimed to see visions and draw the supernatural, but whose art never leaps into the abstraction Houghton dares. A kaleidosc of peacock patterns floating in a forest of deep colour overlaid with delicate white traceries is, explains the text on the reverse Titian, no less. A spooky portrait of Christ emerging out of golden light and cobwebby arabesques -one of the few figurative in art – is ascribed to Saint Luke, the apostle who according to medieval tradition was a skilled artist who portrayed the Virgin Mi



Sept 1870) by Georgiana Houghton Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia Georgiana Houghton, c.1882. Photograph: Siyu Chen Lewis/Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia Reminiscent of Blake ... the back of Houghton's work The Eye of the Lord. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melboume, Australia 'Some holy fire' ... The Eye of God (25 Sept 1862) - the inscription on the reverse ames Correggio as Houghton's spiri quide. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne Australia

Why are there so few famous women in the history of art? This exhibition proves it's because w wrong places. Before the 20th century, women were excluded from the professional art world by academies that put men first. Misogynist critics argue even today that the resulting invisibility me somehow more naturally talented (as the late Brian Sewell liked to claim). The discovery of Geo Houghton turns that nonsense upside down.

This woman was a genius - yet she could only create and show her art by attributing it, quite lite white males. Because of her spiritualist beliefs she has been consigned to the cultural margins a dismissed as an eccentric. The art here does not come from museums. Much of it has been len Victorian Spiritualists' Union in Melbourne. This is the kind of place where the art of women lies spiritualist archives, botanical albums, embroideries, diaries and other refuges for disdained cre



'Out of time' ... The Eye of the Lord (1 Sept 1870) by Georgiana Houghton. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia Georgiana Houghton, c.1882. Photograph: Siyu Chen Lewis/Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia Reminiscent of Blake ... the back of Houghton's work The Eye of the Lord. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia 'Some holy fire' ... The Eye of God (25 Sept 1862) – the inscription on the reverse names Correggio as Houghton's spirit guide. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists Union, Melboume, Australia

Very little is known about Houghton's artistic de Her own statements attribute her talent to the g Yet her earliest watercolours are opulently reim studies of flowers. It seems likely she had some floral artist, one of the visual practices consider respectable for Victorian women. What is much explain is how she made the leap into abstract before Kandinsky.

Victorian society dreaded the emptiness of any abstract. When John Ruskin accused the painte 1877 of "throwing a pot of paint in the face of th his impressionistic Nocturnes, Whistler sued an humiliated by a farthing's damages. Yet under t noses and behind the veil of spiritualism Hough much further, right into pure abstraction.

Rescued at last, her genius soars. With their lay three dimensional worlds of wild colour touched subtle, delicate lacy mist, these powerful creatic me of some of Jackson Pollock's paintings. The the intensity and authenticity that makes great a

painters like Pollock, Kandinsky and Rothko compelling. Like the very best art of modern times, Houghton's is driven by inner truth. From where does that truth emerge? Houghton's is driven by inner truth. came from beyond the grave. I almost believe her. Some holy fire blazes in this eve-opening exhibition.

Georgiana Houghton: Spirit Drawings is at the Courtauld Gallery, London from 16 June to 11 September

comments

- miffytherabbit
- 15 Jun 2016 1:21



'Out of time' ... The Eye of the Lord (1 Sept 1870) by Georgiana Houghton. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, Australia Georgiana Houghton, c. 1882. Photograph: • EHBillionjinbad Siyu Chen Lewis/Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melbourne, 15 Jun 2016 5:39 Australia Reminiscent of Blake ... the back of Houghton's work The Eye of the Lord. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melboume, Australia 'Some holy fire' ... The Eye of God (25 Houghton's spirit guide. Photograph: Victorian Spiritualists' Union, Melboume, Australia

l get a strange feeling that her work is almost like an abstract Richard Dadd. Really involving and manic but structured and die One gets a sense of the artist in a kind of reverie as she worked.

 EHBillion 15 Jun 2016 3:08

Richard Dadd could really draw though. These are essentially swirls and scribbles with some primitive drawing thrown in, pret hardly worthy of a Dadd comparison, even at his most far gone. Houghtons work belongs alongside Hilma af Klint, but i think over rated personally. Painting falling into pattern with some quasi spiritual wind at its back.

 jinbadEHBillion 15 Jun 2016 5:17

Good insights. I think this is more like Madge Gill - what do you reckon?

15 Jun 2016 5:39

Without being too dismissive a lot of whats called outsider art is often obsessively detailed and based in repeated patterns in Sept 1862) - the inscription on the reverse names Correggio as case it is all checkerboards and triangles, in Houghton's swirly peacock feathers, both feature occasional almond eyed cartoo suppose my point is that alot of this work is similarly overworked, familiar and results, personally, in a slightly queezy feeling w very enjoyable. A bit like a stranger smiling and talking incessantly in intimate detail about themselves at you while picking you

finger that smells strongly of Dettol. My problem I suppose, but when I look at the work I feel like I might be going mad. You dont doubt it you say? well, burn-tish. though that once form and representation are banished or lost and art heads out into total freedom it often collapses back into intense pattern making. I suppose mad as nature though ultimately.

- jinbadEHBillion 15 Jun 2016 6:48
- mmm, I think I was thinking more that these works are supposedly dictated by a voice from another world. So rather than be personally irritated by the nutter the message I think it's interesting to see patterns emerging - often literally - and that these pictures can be cathartic for the maker - although not always interest first pass for the viewer. Top of the list for me though in terms of visionary and constantly engaging are Blake, naturally, and the little known outside of Norway La
- machenbach 15 Jun 2016 3:11

Interesting stuff.

Funny how Jesus seems to have nicked Elizabeth Barrett Browning's hairstyle.

TheSentinel 15 Jun 2016 4:53

"So why was she completely forgotten"

the patriarchy?

"One reason is that she was a woman in a world that only saw artistic genius in men"

Oh I'm good at this. Next question?

 ChaoticWaveTheSentinel 15 Jun 2016 5:14

If you don't have anything to say about Georgiana Houghton's works, or believe in or care about misogyny, why do you still have to write a comment?

 Tree201TheSentinel 15 Jun 2016 8:38

A comment by someone who knows nothing pretending to know everything.

· galadrielsmirror2 15 Jun 2016 4:55

wish I lived near enough London to go and see this - the paintings/drawings look fabulous. thanks for the article.

· jinbad

15 Jun 2016 5:16

Mmm. I will definitely go and see this,. But in these pages recently I bigged-up Icon painting and was roundly shouted down by commentators who seemed to feel that I represented superstitious nonsense. When do the firmly held beliefs of people become authenticated? When we can pass it off as mental illness?

 riggbeck 15 Jun 2016 5:19

Because of her spiritualist beliefs she has been consigned to the cultural margins and dismissed as an eccentric.

Mainstream religious art is also based on untenable religious beliefs. Some of it is undoubtedly eccentric - Hieronymus Bosch, for example.

 NancyGrovesriggbeck 15 Jun 2016 5:24

Which Jonathan - and the world - also fell for in a BIG way >>>

https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/feb/11/hieronymus-bosch-review-a-heavenly-host-of-delights-on-the-road-to-hell

I was very sad to miss the Bosch show in Holland, but am now plotting a trip to Madrid, where this horde has been reunited with the Garden of Earthly Delights.

 riggbeck 15 Jun 2016 5:28 There's definitely a spiritualist ambience reflected in the swirly shapes. Spiritualism is also a bit swirly and vague. For all the messages from the dead, no spirit ever has clear description of the Afterlife, beyond pious and uplifting platitudes.

Ingill

15 Jun 2016 5:32

her almost entirely non-figurative watercolours in London

To me, coming from a background in literary criticism, non-figurative means "literal"; does "non-figurative" mean "non-representational, therefore abstract" in art criticisr

I enjoyed this article and would go see the exhibit if I could. Thanks for introducing the artist to us.

philipphilip99

15 Jun 2016 5:40

Houghton is arguably the first ever abstract artist.

Only if you dismiss whole swathes of prehistoric and Eastern art.

Leviathan21philipphilip99

15 Jun 2016 11:41

Not made by white people. Doesn't count.

o countfifeLeviathan21

15 Jun 2016 23:52

prehistoric people, obviusly were green.

sidh

15 Jun 2016 5:42

Rubbish work, Jones. Backward, esp if you think of what was happening on the continent at the same time (all the more terrible, if you compare the work to Blake or Mi miniatures or Japanese scroll painting). If the artist wasn't from this Isle, you'd have trashed her. And that would have been fun to see...

cybernautic

15 Jun 2016 5:57

I prefer Emin's filthy bed.

riggbeckcybernautic

15 Jun 2016 6:46

There's probably an internet law that any discussion about art, however unrelated, will contain a snarky reference to Emin's bed. Have you told Tracey how much snuggle in there? You never know, she might say yes.

EHBillion riggbeck

15 Jun 2016 7:06

She is a happily married woman now.

o riggbeck EHBillion

15 Jun 2016 7:16

No joy for cybernautic then.

· stupormundi

15 Jun 2016 6:00

Victorian society was so peculiar - look at the artists it produced, even the Pre-Raphaelites. A lot of spiritual-mythical froth with a big hole where its humanity had gone r almost (only almost, mind) tempted to say that the people most damaged by the British Empire were the British themselves.

Ingill stupormundi

15 Jun 2016 6:44

How lucky for you that you belong to the completely sane, humane, not-even-slightly-peculiar twenty-first century.

stupormundi Ingill

15 Jun 2016 7:38

Ah, but my comment was just an opinion based on what I read in the article, whereas yours is not quite (but almost) an ad hominem attack. Or are you 163 years memories of precisely those dear departed figures? If so, I apologise.

o Ingill stupormundi

15 Jun 2016 8:09

It's not an ad hominem attack since I'm living in the twenty-first century just as much as you are. We're weird and peculiar too, and so is our art. That's my point ϵ opinion is that we aren't, or that compared to the Victorians we aren't, then that's what I disagree with.

MisterSmiles

15 Jun 2016 6:00

She was on the 'shrooms.....

My mate used to draw stuff like this every time he was off his tits.

He weren't no medium, bruv.

Antonio Acuña

15 Jun 2016 6:10

Reminds me of Hildegard von Bingen visions...

o Mark Mclauchlan Antonio Acuña

15 Jun 2016 6:27

Reminds me of the ayhuasca shaman's work:

https://www.google.co.uk/search?

q=pablo+amaringo&newwindow=1&safe=off&biw=1366&bih=643&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjE1uaUkarNAhXGORoKHUpiDjUQ_AUIBigB

• 12345BOLLOCKSaeht443

15 Jun 2016 6:20

Fernand Desmoulins a French spiritualist and artist did stranger ones than these... https://www.google.co.uk/search?

q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=1440&bih=809&source=lnms&tbm=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=isch&q=fernand+desmoulins&biw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&source=lnms&tbw=800&

Matango

15 Jun 2016 6:57

This looks so interesting, it reminds of some of the works shown at a great exhibition of art by people suffering from mental disorders (Prinzhorn Collection?) shown at I Gallery back in the way back when. And of course, the William Blake similarities. I'll try to see it.

dave56 Matango

15 Jun 2016 13:04

Andre Breton made the same connection, advising his Surrealists to look at the work of spiritualist mediums and the work of the mainly schizophrenic artists in th collection. Like the spiritualist artists the schizophrenic artists often worked automatically from the unconscious mind. The Surrealists adopted their technique for work. Helene Smith was a spiritualist artist who inspired Andre Breton, but Georgiana Houghton's work predates hers.

theoldManxman Matango

15 Jun 2016 15:47

There was a fascinating exhibition three years ago at the Wellcome Collection of outsider art from Japan, made by those with mental or mental health problems value their art at various day schemes or institutions. Again there are similarities.

· Andrew McBride

15 Jun 2016 7:03

Dreadful doodling conwoman.

And the art isn't much better.

OldSynner

15 Jun 2016 7:16

She might have been slightly talented as an artist, but as a medium she was just a flat out liar and con artist. John Nevil Maskelyne who spent a lot of time debunking s a more more interesting figure.

misskappus

15 Jun 2016 9:21

"the eye of God stares out of a swirling storm of line and colour, like the eye of a whale seen through turbulent oceanic depths. It is awe-inspiring."

Sorry JJ I just don't see it - to me a disturbing fe/male face with a smirk, adolescent beard, with cold detached gaze amid coloured spirograph patterns. Come on there better female artists... And artists who are truly awe inspiring.

"some holy fire blazes"..... hmmm.....

o 15 Jun 2016 12:36

That isn't the painting that he was referring to, he was referring to the second picture down, the one that looks very much like the eye of a whale seen through tu oceanic depths.

o 15 Jun 2016 14:29

Ha you're right - still don't get it tho.

misskappus misskappus

15 Jun 2016 18:28

And holy? To me that is sacred reverence, mighty, majestic love, piercing to our core, humbling and thrilling. A sense of seeing and being seen by God. Not this ϵ malevolent subcutaneous creepiness. I can sympathise with JJ's discombobulation being alone with these paintings.

NuitsdeYoung

15 Jun 2016 13:49

Synaesthesia?

It reminds me of how a synaesthesic friend described sounds.

Nick Greaves

15 Jun 2016 15:59

Her married life espouses the old fashioned virtues of fidelity and trust. It's built on a foundation of rock.

Nick Greaves

15 Jun 2016 16:09

Those swirls are like particle trails. Apt if she was drawing upon a reality that surrounds while being invisible to us.

https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=particle+trails+cern&num=30&safe=off&client=safari&hl=en-

 $gb\&biw=1024\&bih=672\&tbm=isch\&source=lnms\&sa=X\&ved=0\\ahUKEwjH1dqVkqvNAhXD0xoKHVgVAxQQ_AUICigC\&dpr=2\#imgrc=jSqiOeU3Gv7R2M\%3A$

o 15 Jun 2016 17:24

Yes! Or look at their similarity to this picture of gravitational waves.

http://www.msn.com/en-au/news/world/gravitational-waves-scientists-detect-second-fantastically-significant-signal/ar-AAh6h2F?fullscreen=true#image=1

• TWOBOBS 15 Jun 2016 16:39

Absolutely incredible art. When you consider who created it, and when, it is astounding.

• SylysPalindrome 15 Jun 2016 21:46

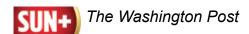
Is this like a Victorian Little and Large?

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Steal a rock from Gettysburg and risk the curse

ottawasun.com



First posted: Friday, July 08, 2016 03:51 PM EDT | Updated: Friday, July 08, 2016 04:08 PM EDT

Tourists who have stolen rocks from the Gettysburg National Military Park have been mailing them back, fearing they've been cursed by their ill-gotten souvenirs.

On its website, the park posted a pair of notes that came with a couple of packages of stones they received.

One man sent back three rocks and wrote that he and his wife had picked them up on a visit to Gettysburg 10 or 11 years ago.

"Our lives fell apart. My wife took my son and walked out on me. I lost my house and (the) majority of what I owned and ended up in jail for nine years. My now ex-wife has fared no better. She has been plagued with health problems and other issues," he wrote.

Another letter, sent to the park in June 2015, told a similar story. The writer had also suffered some personal setbacks after taking a small stone from the battlefield. "Since then I have had nothing but horrible times, injured on the job, several surgeries, relationship failures, etc. Perhaps coincidental, maybe, but I'm returning this small stone and twig."

In the conclusion of his handwritten letter, the man asked that the two items be returned to Devil's Den where he had found them.

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Does this spooky snap show the GHOST of an archer drawing his bow behind a family?

express.co.uk



Does this spooky snap show the GHOST of an archer drawing his bow behind a family?

AT FIRST this photograph appears to be just an innocent family portrait - but does it show the

spooky image of a ghostly archer drawing his bow in the background?

PUBLISHED:10:20, Mon, Jul 11, 2016 | UPDATED: 10:37, Mon, Jul 11, 2016



MERCURY PRESS & MEDIA LTD

The eerie outline of an archer can be made out in this photo

David Lonsdale, 58, took the picture of his two daughters stood smiling in front of Rhuddlan Castle in Wales on a trip with daughters Sarah and Fiona, then aged 10 and six, more than a quarter of a century ago.

But it was only when the retired fork lift driver was flicking through some old photos last week when he spotted what he thinks looks like a haunting figure

stood inside an alcove of the castle looming in the background.

Mr Lonsdale believes the image shows a dark figure "peering" round the 13th century castle walls, with black eyes and hands up as if drawing a bow in their direction.

Mr Lonsdale, from Brighouse, West Yorkshire, said: "I was just going through some old photos and I took a picture of it on my phone to show my daughters as I thought it was a nice picture.

"However when I blew the picture up, I thought I noticed a figure that seemed to be peering out from behind the wall.

"I've been showing it to friends and family and they were all saying 'oh my god!' as they all saw it too.

"I remember going to the castle. We used to go over there quite a lot as my mum and dad lived right nearby.

The ghost can be seen in the wall by Rhuddlan Castle in Wales

"But there was nothing unusual about the day at all. I just wanted to get a picture of the girls with the river and castle both in the background.

"I took quite a few and on other ones you can see right through the gap to the grass on the other side but on this one the figure is in the way.



MERCURY PRESS & MEDIA LTD



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"There's definitely something there. I can see the figure peering around the wall, stood side on. He has black eyes and his hands are in a position like he is drawing an arrow back."

Close up the spectre can be seen more easily

I certainly found it a bit weird. I have never seen anything like that before.

The castle, in Rhuddlan, Denbighshire, Wales, was built by Edward I in 1277 following his conquest of the country in the First Welsh War.

Mr Lonsdale said: "I have no idea if it is a spirit or a ghost but it does look like he's drawing a bow to me.

"I certainly found it a bit weird. I have never seen anything like that before.

"I've never really had much of an interest in ghosts or any of that sort of thing but I've always had an interest in history.

"You can imagine all sorts of things but I'm putting it out there for people to comment on and see what others think.



MERCURY PRESS & MEDIA LTD

see the figure I am talking about.

Mr Lonsdale says he doesn't disbelieve in the spirit world

"I don't disbelieve in the spirit world but I have never seen any proof of it either. I have never seen any pictures before that have convinced me that anything exists one way or another.

"You can get drawn into UFOs and so on but I've never given it a lot of thought. But I thought I would share this as it's so unusual.

"I shared it on social media and people from all over the world have commented on it and many

"I probably took the picture on an old Kodak - I certainly didn't have a digital camera back then.

"I probably had to get the film developed so I may even have the negative for it around somewhere but I have no idea where.

"Since I showed the girls, Fiona was a bit freaked out by it but Sarah was less convinced - she's more sceptical of stuff like that.

"She saw the shape but is not sure what it is.

"But to me it does look like a figure and lots of people see it too."

5 Comments

2 days ago

JohnBull

Nope!

2 days ago

Duggan

Effects of light and shade - I've been to Rhuddlan many times, never met anything worse than myself.

3 days ago

Antitheist

No, it doesn't.

3 days ago

David

I must nip round there with my longbow!

3 days ago

susanhaynes

I would say it is the stonework from the window on the next side round Northern and Shell Copyright ©2016 Express Newspapers. "Daily Express" is a registered trademark. All rights reserved.

Outrage as possessed ghost is 'stolen' from haunted pub toilet

15:15, 31 Aug 2016 Updated 17:14, 31 Aug 2016 By Joshua Barrie

mirror.co.uk



Ghost Caught On Camera At Ye Olde Man and Scythe, Bolton, Greater

Manchester

The owner of a haunted pub has slammed a Chinese artist who claims he bottled up their infamous ghost and stole it.

Lu Pingyuan says he's captured the ghost of James Stanley, who's famous for supposedly haunting Ye Olde Man and Scythe in Bolton.

The artist claims to have bottled up the spectre – which is now on display at the Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art in Manchester.

So fascinated by the ghost was Pingyuan that he travelled all the way from Shanghai to Greater Manchester to steal it.

He says he followed the phantom into the pub's bathroom before performing an incantation to trap it, the *Bolton News* writes.

"I was totally captivated by the legend, that the ghost remained in the human world long after his decapitation", Pingyuan explains.



Ye Olde Man and Scythe in Bolton

Ye Olde Man and Scythe is missing its ghost

But now, pub owner Richard Greenwood wants Stanley back – he's missing his spirit and is determined to see it returned.

The landlord of Ye Olde Man and Scythe has penned a moving letter to Pingyuan.

"I would have liked to have been privy to your actions and indeed to the exhibition before the ghost of James Stanley was taken out of Bolton, his ties to the town and to Ye Olde Man and Scythe run very deeply", writes

Greenwood.

"I feel very strongly that James Stanley's ghost should remain in Bolton and at Ye Olde Man and Scythe to preserve the natural order of things.

Did a Chinese artist steal a pub's resident ghost?

"That said", Greenwood continues, "I do believe that your exhibition should travel and be seen by many people around the world and I would like to contribute to this as long as at the end of your



Ghost Caught On Camera At Ye Olde Man and Scythe, Bolton, Greater Manchester

exhibition it returns home."

Pingyuan is said to have become captivated by the ghost of Stanley after seeing video footage from back in 2014.

The pub dates back to 1251 and is the fourtholdest pub in Britain. It's reputedly haunted by the Seventh Earl of Derby, James Stanley.

Stanley was a Royalist whose family originally owned the inn. History suggests that the nobleman spent the last hours of his life there before he was beheaded in 1651 towards the end of the Civil War.

The chair he sat in before he was taken outside and executed is still in the pub today.

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http://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-36965594



Big Bench

When US-born Chris Bangle moved from Germany to the tiny Italian village of Clavesana in 2009, he waved goodbye to a 17-year career as Chief of Design for BMW. It was a huge change for him, but his arrival also had an impact on his new neighbours, writes Dany Mitzman.

Fed up with designing cars for the elite, Chris Bangle wanted to create something for everyone, and something more in tune with nature.

One idea he hit upon was a bench - a giant one, far bigger than a normal park bench - and together with his wife, Catherine, he set up The Big Bench Community Project.



Chris Bangle

The project encourages the installation of colourful benches in publicly accessible spots with breathtaking views. When you sit on one, legs dangling beneath you, you feel like a child again and experience the wonders of the world around you with a fresh perspective - that, anyway, is Bangle's intention.

The benches are also so big that there's plenty of space to share them, and to interact with friends or strangers.

There are now 19 privately financed benches, thanks to the Bangles' efforts, many in the Langhe, the hilly area of Piedmont, in north-west Italy, where Clavesana is located. But you won't find an app with a map to guide you to each location - part of the Big Bench experience is to discover them, and the views they offer, like treasure in a hunt.

Angelo and Daria came from Venice to see the benches, having read about them in the newspaper.

"They're quite hidden and not that easy to find," says Angelo.

"I imagined they'd be closer to the road but this is much nicer because you have to seek them out.



Angelo and Daria

"The idea is lovely because you really feel like you become part of the landscape, which is something that doesn't normally happen. Sitting up here you ask yourself, 'Why am I so small and out of proportion?' You know it should be that way but you often take things for granted and think that you drive everything. Up here in this context you question this, and have to admit that you are actually less significant."



to go to get to the Big Yellow Bench as it stands in the gardens

Rinalda

doesn't have far

Big Yellow Bench

of her family-run farmhouse hotel and restaurant, but most of the time she is too busy to clamber up on to it - in fact this is only the second time she has done it.

"It's true what people say: when you get up here you feel like a child again. I dream of having the time to sit here, relax and enjoy the view."



Paolo and Chris

"Not touching the ground with your feet is a strong sensation because it really does take you back to being a child as it's not normally a sensation you have as an adult when you sit," says Paolo, sitting beside Chris.

"It's a very simple concept," he says. "Contemporary art is often difficult to understand but in this case the emotions are the same for everyone. It's not like when you say, 'Ooh, I can see a lion in this,' and someone else says, 'I can see a tiger.' Here it's the same for

everyone, and I think that's its greatest success."

This pale blue bench was built by the Italian League of the Deaf from the town of Alba, famous for its truffles.

Corrado and his friends discovered the big benches while out walking and decided, as a community of 40 deaf people, they'd like to construct one. Their group self-financed with the help of other deaf communities - some donations coming from as far afield as Sweden. Many of them put their hand prints underneath the bench in different coloured paint.

Corrado hopes the silence of the place will encourage hearing people to think about what it would be to be deaf.



Italian League of the Deaf bench, Roberta (left) and her husband Corrado

"This place can be useful for hearing people to come up and try not talking, try signing and understand what it means. And it's very connected to nature so you can come here and hear nothing," he says.

He has told his wife he would like his ashes to be scattered here when he dies.



The Big White Bench was built by the Torion

The Big White Bench

Association, from the village of Vezza d'Alba. After clearing the hill of overgrown pine woods, the group discovered the old tower, which had been hidden by the woods. They chose it as the location for their bench.

Situated at the top of a high hill overlooking their village, they financed the bench, a matching picnic table just behind it, street lighting, and a water fountain for thirsty big-bench pilgrims.



The Big Apricot Bench in Costigliole Saluzzo

The Big Apricot Bench in the village of Costigliole Saluzzo is the most recently built of the 19 big benches. The industrial equipment business owned by eight-year-old Noemi's grandfather made the bench's metal frame.

"I like the bench a lot because it's really high up," she says.



The Big Blue Bench, is located in the Gallo family

The Big Blue Bench is located in the Gallo family vineyard

vineyard, which dates back to 1795. Their only comment: "Cheers!"

Photographs by MariaGrazia Moncada

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upi.com



By Ben Hooper | Aug. 10, 2016 at 10:34 AM Follow @oddnewsupi



This goose is not a fan of drones, and is about to prove it. Screenshot: JukinMedia

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands, Aug. 10 (UPI) -- A man using a camera drone to take aerial footage of an old building in the Netherlands recorded a moment a territorial goose knocked his device out of the sky.

Michiel Rote posted a video to

YouTube showing the footage his DJI Phantom 3 drone recorded at the site of a historical building in the Netherlands.

The footage shows the drone slowly descending while filming the building, and a flock of nile geese flying from the top of the building when the drone gets close.

One of the geese heads straight for the drone and swats it out of the sky.

"Never thought these kind of birds would or could attack my drone. Luckily both parties were (almost) unharmed! I lost a piece of my prop....the goose was just fine!" Rote wrote in the video's description.

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Grandfather returns from the dead two months after family had his body cremated

16:25, 29 Aug 2016 Updated 16:26, 29 Aug 2016 By Ross Logan

mirror.co.uk



Man turns up days after he's 'cremated

found a badly decomposed body matching his description.

A family were stunned when a grandfather was found by police - months after attending his cremation

Miguel Angel Gomar De Luna, 74, had escaped his nursing home and gone on a drinking spree, sleeping rough and begging for more money to buy booze.

After months of searching for him in the cold winter months, officers called the family to say they had

His daughter, Lucero Gomar Ramos, was shown pictures of the corpse but it was in such a bad state she struggled to recognise her father.

Holidaymakers flee from sea in terror after 'shark' spotted just off Costa Del Sol



El Diario

Miguel Angel Gomar De Luna returned home two months after his own funeral

But she was told if she did not confirm the body as that of her missing father, they would not be able to release him to the family, forcing her to sign papers confirming his death.

Days later a funeral was held for Miguel and the body was cremated with the ashes returned to the family.

But on February 24 this year, the family got another call saying Miguel had been found alive.

Pensioner walked home from hospital in gown and slippers at 3am after staff said they couldn't take her

He returned to the family home drunk, with bandages around his head from unknown injuries sustained during his months long bender.



He had escaped his nursing home and embarked on a mammoth drinking spree

A video of the bizarre reunion in Chihuahua, Mexico, shows Miguel slurring his words and saying: "They thought I was dead, but I just walk and walk."

El Diario

Lucero said: "Imagine our surprise when we spoke to police who told us that they had located him on the street, we could not believe it.

"We thought he was gone."

It is not clear who the body mistaken for Miguel was.

The family also face a battle to gain back their relatives identity, having already been declared legally dead.

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By Daniel Uria | Sept. 16, 2016 at 4:07 PM



A six to seven foot great white shark was spotted leaping out of the water off Ocean Beach in San Francisco on Wednesday morning. Screen capture/Surfline

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 16 (UPI) -- A group of early morning surfers at a San Francisco beach witnessed a great white shark leaping out of the water.

Surfing website Surfline captured

footage of the massive shark on their beachside cameras as it sprang from the water on Ocean Beach.

"I saw it straight on," surfer Nick Masturzo said. "And when I saw that white belly go up and the super defined white of pectoral fins I knew what it was. I told everyone around me and went in."

Shark Research Committee's Ralph Collier was able to confirm the shark on video was a seven-toeight-foot juvenile great white.

No shark attacks had been reported at Ocean Beach but a shark allegedly bumped into a surfer in 2005.

The Mythology of the Green Man and the Green Knight



woodlands_by_jonasdero-d721ppy

The Mythology of the Green Man and the Green Knight

Byadmin

On August 8, 2016

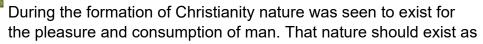
The Significance of Green

Green has been known for untold ages as the colour of the fairy. Green was so universally recognised, as the colour of the fairy that many in Scotland refused to wear it as

to do so would be to invite the anger of the fairy folk. "Greenies" and "greencoaties" were common euphemisms used in Britain for the fairy.

Green was a colour shunned by many as being associated with evil fairies and witches. But why green? Green is also associated with nature, with ripening life, with fertility and that is the reason.

Green was a colour shunned by many as being associated with evil fairies and witches. But why green? Green is also associated with nature, with ripening life, with fertility and that is the reason.



an entity unto herself, with powers beyond man's, was a thought that put fear into many.

Later, nature was viewed as evil and anything associated with nature was seen in a similar way. That green represented the power and fertile life of nature slowly came to be associated with evil, and thus Pagan, forms bent on the torment of mankind.



Green Man

Thus fairies, who were mischievous entities of the underworld, part of the Old Race which inhabited many parts of the world prior to man's arrival, became, if not outright evil, close relatives of evil.

The December 28, 1850 issue of the English periodical Notes and Queries reported,

"In a parish adjoining Dartmoor is a green fairy ring of considerable size, within which a black hen and chickens are occasionally seen at nightfall."

Black hens were often considered as embodiments of evil.

Nature

But, green as a colour has been symbolic as well with the symbolism of new growth and greenness and it is this association which the fairy have their link.

Reestablishing a link to the Green Man and the Wild Huntsman

But it is also this link that humankind has lost over the centuries which has been reestablished through the Green Man, the Wild Huntsman and the other legends and images of the supernatural. Green is, according to the Doel's, an "extension to the natural world—and the supernatural in both its 'Otherworld' and afterlife elements."



Brian Stone, a Reader in English Literature at the Open University, most succinctly defines the importance of the colour of green in regards to the Green Knight,

"it surprises me that no critic has picked up one very important medieval theological reference to green as the colour of truth... evergreen...is the colour assigned to ever-living and eternal truth."

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

One of the best-known stories of the 14th century is that of the nephew of King Arthur, Sir Gawain. Written during the peak of popularity of the Green Man stone and wood carvings, the

author of this famous poem remains unknown but is believed to have been a resident of northwestern England. The poet is also a sophisticated and talented alliterative stylist, which was a common style during the older Anglo-Saxon period. The poetic story, as summarised by Richard Cavendish:



"At Camelot on New Year's Day there rode into Arthur's hall a gigantic green warrior on a towering horse, holding a holly branch in one hand and an immense battle-axe in the other. His skin was green, his hair was green, and even his horse was green. He had come to play what he called a game.

Any champion who dared could strike him one blow with the axe, on condition that a year later the champion submit to a return blow from the green knight. Gawain took up the challenge and struck the green knight a blow that cut his head clean off his shoulders and sent it rolling to the floor.

The green knight calmly picked up his head by the hair and turned the Green Knight

face towards Gawain. The eyelids opened and the mouth spoke, telling Gawain to meet him for the return blow a year later at the Green Chapel."

Eventually, the year passed and Gawain set out on his journey to the Green Chapel to meet the gigantic green knight.

"After a long journey he came to a noble castle, where he was welcomed by the jovial Sir Bercilak and his lovely young wife. He stayed there until New Year's Day, royally

entertained by Bercilak and, though sorely tempted, resisting the persistent attempts of Bercilak's wife to seduce him.

Gawain goes to the Green Chapel

On New Years Day Gawain went as he said he would to the Green Chapel. There "the green knight appeared and Gawain bravely bared his neck for a stroke of the axe. The green knight raised the axe high but struck Gawain only a glancing blow, which nicked his skin.

He then explained that he was Sir Bercilak, transformed into the green knight by the magic of Morgan le Fay, who had planned the whole adventure in the hope of discrediting the Round Table. Gawain had been spared because he had honourably refrained from making love to Bercilak's wife and had shown himself to be the most faultless knight in the world.



according to J.D. Wakefield, is that it was not a structure but rather a green mound situated in a valley beside a stream of bubbling water. Wakefield

was, in reality, Silbury Hill—a sacred man-made mound in Wiltshire not far from West Kennett Long Barrow and Avebury—two other ancient sacred sites.

How do we associate the green knight to the Green Man?

How do we associate the green knight to the Green Man? This was obviously a test for Gawain, and one he passed, but this is also a story of "truth-bringing" through a mixture of pagan ritual and the confused teachings of medieval Christianity. The poem also is an alliterative telling of the turning of the year, taking place at a time between two winters, which signifies a time of the death of vibrant vegetation, and then a changing back to life through renewed growth, and then again, returns to death.

The green knight is beheaded and through his sacrifice, he shows that life still goes on and, as John Matthews notes.

"the challenges us to honor the sacrifice he makes every winter."

In addition, according to Matthews, the poem tells us that

one of the gifts of the Green Man is that he instructs us in how to face our deepest fears and conquer them. In this way, he becomes a companion as well as a challenger, a dual role that is present in the archetype in virtually all of its manifestations."



The Old Green Man

The Green Knight's long hair and beard

Other associations with the Green Man are found in the green knight's long hair and beard, both green of course. His beard

"is like a bush...his long green hair covers his chest and back... down to his elbows. He carries a holly branch in one hand..."

As the poem reads:



Green Knight By Des Hanley

"Men gaped at the hue of him Ingrained in garb and mien, A fellow fiercely grim, And all a glittering green.

"And garments of green girt the fellow about – And verily his vesture was all vivid green, So were the bars on his belt and the brilliants set

In ravishing array on the rich accoutrements About himself and his saddle on silken work. ... Yes, garbed all in green was the gallant rider.

And the hair of his head was the same hue as his horse..."

Brian Stone, in his essay on the Green Knight, also discusses this mixture of the Green Knight's character:

"...the Green Knight's combination of greenness, hairiness, energy, earthiness and mainly rough, imperative speech incline us irrevocably to think of two common medieval types, one an outcast and the other a rural deity.

The wild man of the woods, the 'wodwose', was often an outlaw who...had developed sub-human habits and the fierce unpredictable behaviour of a wild beast. The green man, on the other hand, was a personification of spring, a mythological supernatural being who persists to this day in English folk dance and in the name of many pubs."

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight survives in folk memory

The green knight is a mixture of the heroic tales of knights, of Christian value teaching and of the lore of the pre-Christian god of vegetation. The tale of the green knight continues into "modern" times through the festivals of the Mummer Plays, which have been popular folk celebrations for at least 300 years and probably further back in time, and the Sword Dances.

These folk festivals occur around Christmas and are known for the green leafed "Wilde Mann" and other green festooned figures such as the Burry Man who are an integral part of the celebrations.

I do not believe that we can interpret the green knights actions in this poem as easily as Matthews seems to but Sir Gawain and the Green Knight does indicate that the underlying archetype was equally important in the 14th century to the literate and peasant classes in England, through



storytelling and carved images, as he is universally important today among mankind as exhibited through carvings, novels and other forms of expression.

The Burry Man

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The real story of the Secret Agent and the Greenwich Observatory bombing

Rebekah Higgitt Friday 5 August 2016 Last modified on Friday 5 August 2016

thequardian.com

The bombing in Greenwich Park described in Conrad's Secret Agent was inspired by real events. Was the Royal Observatory the intended target and, if so, why?



Toby Jones as Verloc from the BBC's The Secret Agent, at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich Photograph: Des Willie/BBC/World Productions/Des Willie The Royal Observatory, Greenwich, in an early 20th-century postcard. Note the closed gates. Photograph: Wikipedia The Galvano-Magnetic 24-hour gate clock at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. Photograph: Martin Argles for the Guardian

Rebekah Higgitt, formerly a curator at the Royal Observatory Greenwich, is a lecturer at the University of Kent.

Those who have watched the recent adaptation of Joseph Conrad's The Secret Agent will have seen the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, feature in the plot involving a terrorist bombing. A tendency to note the resonance with today's fears of an attack in London may have meant people have overlooked the historical event that inspired Conrad.

There was, indeed, a bomb explosion in Greenwich Park, close to the Observatory on 15 February 1894. It is not clear whether or not the Observatory was the target but the only person to die, the man carrying the chemical explosives, was an anarchist who may well have seen this British Admiralty-run facility as an appropriate symbol to attack.

As the Observatory's chief assistant, Herbert Hall Turner, succinctly put it in his journal, at quarter to five in the afternoon: "A dynamiter anarchist was blown up with his own bomb in Greenwich Park."

Neither Turner nor the astronomer royal, William Christie, were present but two assistants, William Thackray and Henry Hollis, filed reports, now in the Observatory's archive. It was reported that there had been a "sharp and clear detonation, followed by a noise like a shell going through the air."

They saw a park warden and school boys running toward a crouched figure on "the zig-zag path below the Observatory", which no longer exists. After the mortally injured, but conscious, man was moved to the nearby Seaman's Hospital, Hollis, Thackray and the Observatory's gate porter William McManus were involved in the grisly business of searching the area. They found only spattered blood and fragments of bone spread over an area of nearly 60 yards.

The police identified the dead man as Martial Bourdin, a 26-year-old Frenchman with links to the anarchist Club Autonomie. He had travelled to Greenwich from Westminster by tram, after walking from his lodging in Fitzroy Street with the explosives and a large amount of money. This suggests that he hoped to escape, perhaps to France, after the event.

The bomb obviously exploded too soon. Perhaps, as in Conrad's novel, there was an unfortunate trip, although whether Bourdin was someone else's dupe or himself the mastermind is not known. Was the Observatory even the intended target? Was he on his way somewhere else? Or would Greenwich Park have been sufficiently crowded on a Thursday afternoon for ordinary people to have been the intended victims?

Certainly, while the bomb was powerful enough to rip apart human flesh at close quarters, it would not have had much impact on a building or caused the kind of conflagration imagined in a recent artwork. The Secret Agent dramatisation was quite wrong in suggesting that the gates of the Observatory would have been open to visitors. Before it became a museum in the 1960s, there were high wooden gates and special permission was required to enter through the gatehouse. Lobbing a bomb over would have been unlikely to cause much damage, to staff or buildings.

Conrad was convinced the Observatory was the target, although the novel suggests he could hardly fathom why, calling it "a blood-stained inanity of so fatuous a kind that is impossible to fathom its origin by any reasonable or even unreasonable process of thought."



The Royal Observatory, Greenwich, in an early 20th-century postcard. Note the closed gates.

Given that the zig-zag path was not one of the main paths through the park, it seems likely that Bourdin was indeed intending to walk up to the Observatory. That the explosion blew off his left hand completely, as well as ripping open his stomach, suggests that he may have been getting ready to use the bomb.

It has been suggested by curator David Rooney that Bourdin's target was something that was in fact quite accessible but potentially very symbolic. This was the 24-hour gate clock, which had been showing Greenwich Mean Time to the public since 1852. The significance of GMT, and perhaps of the clock, had been increased in 1880 when the British Government

adopted it as national standard time: a clear example of government control over daily lives.

It was, of course, not the clock itself that defined Britain's time. That was the job of the observers and human computers within the Observatory, using the telescope that defined the Greenwich Meridian, known as the Airy Transit Circle. This was deep within the Observatory complex and inaccessible to passers-by, even if they had understood its significance. The gate clock was merely a "slave", connected by wires to the Observatory's master clock, corrected regularly against astronomical observations. Beyond that, signals were sent by telegraph to clocks or time balls in Westminster, ports and elsewhere.



The Royal Observatory, Greenwich, in an early 20th-century postcard. Note the closed gates. Photograph: Wikipedia The Galvano-Magnetic 24-hour gate clock at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. Photograph: Martin Argles for the Guardian

Was Bourdin sufficiently aware of the Observatory's role in defining and maintaining time for the nation for this to have been his target? Might he have known, too, that the Observatory was the place that helped define space: the site of Longitude 0?

In the 1880s there had been much discussion about international standardisation. Several conferences – including, most famously, the International Meridian Conference held in Washington in 1884 – had met to discuss whether there should be a common prime meridian from which all nations would measure both time and longitude. If so, should this be at Greenwich, another observatory, or elsewhere?

The recommendation of the 1884 delegates was that there should indeed be an internationally recognised meridian from which to calculate longitude and a universal day, and that it should be the one passing through the Royal Observatory's transit instrument. They did not have the power to force this on their governments but, nevertheless, Greenwich's symbolic standing was raised a notch higher in the public consciousness.

We will never know for sure. Bourdin, although conscious and able to speak for some time after his horrific injuries, did not divulge his intentions. We do know that another British observatory was a bomb target less than ten years later, when suffragettes caused "considerable damage" to the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh, in May 1913, and Greenwich was to suffer bombing in the very different context of World War II.

The idea that Bourdin might have attempted to use his bomb to "stop time", or at least to highlight Government control of people's use of time, is certainly compelling.

comments

onthebus5d ago

Sadly the series seemed unwatchable with very cliche language. Tried. Very clumsy.

SpangleJonthebus

I tried but gave up. Dour, leaden, I thought.

Southvillainonthebus5d ago

Agreed. A great cast ill-served by a dull script and leaden direction.

DomesticExtremistonthebus5d ago

The nineties remake with Peter Capaldi was somewhat better (though Capaldi himself is rather green), available on YouTube.

RichardAshby5d ago

I disagree, I thought it well done, though, given my interest in railways, the railway depictions were very inaccurate for the period depicted and the continuity was terrible.

gfewsterRichardAshby5d ago

A number of engines appeared 30 or 40 years too early for their type, and the final straw was the boat train pulling out with 'British Railways' written on the tender - 60 years too early.

The cross-channel ferry depicted was also obviously far too modern for the period, though I know little about ferries. It belonged between the wars.

RobertSnozersgfewster5d ago

The vessel on which at least some of the filming took place was the MV Windsor Castle, c. 1963

NepthsolemRichardAshby5d ago

Also, it was filmed on cameras of a type not seen for another hundred years, and that completely ruined it for me.

John Munro5d ago

I believe that Rome used to define East and West, but the British empire certainly tried to grab the mantle in the 19th century with Greenwich as the centre of the world. Such is the hubris of empires.

 beckyfhJohn Munro 5d ago Contributor

Rome was occasionally used, and was mooted as an option in the 1880s. Many ports and capitals have been used as reference points but the traditional division, between Old World and New, was Cape Verde. This was strongly backed by one of the French delegates in 1884 as a more neutral choice than Greenwich. Obviously the French used the Paris Observatory as their prime meridian, and it was the "scientific" alternative to Greenwich.

The reason that Greenwich was chosen was indirectly rather than directly about empire. It was already the prime meridian most commonly used by shipping around the world because it was the one that was referenced in the maps and tables most commonly used: Britain's Admiralty Charts and Nautical Almanac.

Mark Mclauchlanbeckyfh5d ago

I believe the favoured meriden at the time was through the great pyramid but the British pushed through Greenwich.

beckyfhMark Mclauchlan5d ago

No. That was an idea of Charles Piazzi Smyth's but was never broadly considered. Greenwich, Paris, Cape Verde and the Behring Straits (the "anti-meridian" of Greenwich) were the main contenders. Rome and Jerusalem were also considered.

Goldendays49
 5d ago

Very interesting but not as entertaining as the book or the TV series.

vesemir5d ago

Haven't seen the show but the book is great. It also captures some the sexual politics of the time. The wife who is clearly more intelligent than her silly husband, but quietly bites her lip as she has little agency in society. Quietly protecting her son, and only emerges as an actor at the end when everything falls apart.

puskascatvesemir5d ago

Stevie is her brother

vesemirpuskascat5d ago

Ah right. It's been a while.

Herbgoldvesemir5d ago

Brother, not son.

DomesticExtremist
 5d ago

Of course the real point of *The Secret Agent* is not to solve the mystery of the Greenwich bombing, but to illustrate the way in way the powers that be manipulate and encourage radical terror cells for political ends.

Back then it was Anarchists, later it was far right groups posing as far-lefties (Gladio) these days it is radical islamists, far too many of whom turn out to be 'known wolves'.

Mark MclauchlanDomesticExtremist
 5d ago

Exactly but that is conveniently glossed over by the establishment. But people are sheep and will buy anything they are told because it was on the news or in the paper. Ask the majority of people what Gladio was and they will look at you blankly. If you tell them that governments blow up their own people for political means they will call you a nutter or a conspiracy theorist. They can't be bothered to do a little bit of research to uncover the truth of the matter and are happy to accept any easy explanation that is given instead of asking cui bono.

tedthetopcatDomesticExtremist5d ago

Butterworth's "The World That Never Was" has some interesting things to say on this subject & the development of the state security apparatus more generally https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_World_That_Never_Was

unclestinkyDomesticExtremist

And for the curious but lazy; Gladio

vernier75d ago

And we still have not the faintest idea what time is. We calibrate it: bury it in symbols and metaphors but cannot grasp it even, as a concept. Is it not time to research time?

Danko1981vernier75d ago

I'm pretty sure we can grasp it as a concept.

Mark Mclauchlanvernier7
 5d ago

It's like the St Augustine quote "What then is time? If no one asks me I know what it is. But if I wish to explain it to him who asks, I do not know."

TheDoctorOfLettersvernier75d ago

Time is so 19th Century. This is the epoch of space.

CurAvon5d ago

Why did the BBC change the unnamed foreign power in the book to Russia, especially when the first secretary, Baron Stott-Wartenheim, sounds Germanic, as does Councillor Wurmt, and even Mr. Adolf Verloc ... Seems the state controlled BBC is more interested in pushing propaganda than making a drama close to that of the original book.

RobertSnozersCurAvon5d ago

The replacement first secretary's name is Vladimir. Russia was at the time known to be displeased with Britain harbouring dissidents such as Prince Kropotkin. Conrad's father had protested against Russian rule of Poland, and Conrad wrote other works more explicitly about Russian agents infiltrating dissident emigre communities. It's pretty conventional thinking that the unnamed country in TSA largely represents Russia.

canopusIICurAvon5d ago

The foreign power is presumed to have been Russia in the novel.

Note Conrad was born Polish - Poland then being part of the Russian empire.

georges1CurAvon5d ago

"Unnamed foreign power" would sit uneasily in a naturalistic television drama of this sort, set in a real time and place.

Why Russia? Well, there were a hell of a lot of Russian anarchists in London and thus of interest to the embassy.

the state controlled BBC is more interested in pushing propaganda

The BBC is more interested in viewing figures than "propaganda", although they're hardly successful with this adaptation.

Huples5d ago

Bloody French extremists!

cubahurrah5d ago

I really liked the series and not knowing the story I got really caught up in it.

ffleur cubahurrah5d ago

Me too. The slow moving, restrained behaviour of Winnie and Verloc really worked for me. They were trapped in their situation and couldn't break out or even struggle effectively. And they were surrounded by a whole array of beautifully drawn characters each with their own agendas and all with more freedom than the two central characters. I thought the professor was absolutely delicious! And poor innocent autistic Stevie - capable of so much joie de vivre! I have the advantage of not knowing the book, but I thought this TV creation was very good, though perhaps it fizzled out a bit at the end. Perhaps I'll have to watch it again while it's available and think about that.

Evangelist9 ffleur5d ago

Good post. I agree with your analysis of the characters. Like you, I was particularly taken with the Professor, with his perpetual mad stare and propensity to show the explosive chemicals kept inside his coat as a statement of intent.

Your point about Winnie and Verloc being trapped in their situation and without the agency of the other characters is particularly pertinent. Inspector Heat, for example, makes a deliberate and conscious choice to exercise mercy in that train carriage.

Laudrup105d ago

Such a great novel, is there a more dirty and gritty and just hellish fictional London than this? It's also one of Conrad's most readable novels: Anyone slogged through Lord Jim? Or Under Western Eyes? This is not them, thank god.

I'm intrigued to see this when it makes its way over the channel.

accessallareas Laudrup105d ago

Slogged through (actually enjoyed hugely) both of those. I was forced to read The Secret Agent at school (that was a slog), which made me avoid it in later life. I remember feeling the same way about All Quiet On The Western Front. But reading it again as an adult was revelatory. So I'll definitely give TSA another go.

ronniestorrs Laudrup105d ago

Lord Jim is well worth the effort. Conrad's longer works are notorious for not quite living up to the standard he himself sets in his shorter pieces and there is much in Lord Jim and Nostromo that is, well, uneven - but still amongst the finest writing in the language.

FrogStar

5d ago

The original review here panned this adaptation, but I found it quite interesting - not having read the original, but having heard one on R4.

• grubbedout

5d ago

I have state that I am quite pleased with the quality of the comments and the informative answers here. Excellent.

Grabyrdy

5d ago

The significance of GMT, and perhaps of the clock, had been increased in 1880 when the British Government adopted it as national standard time: a clear example of government control over daily lives.

So that's what Brexit's about. Take back control! Down with Greenwich! Hmmm, wait a minute ...

Pesmog Grabyrdy5d ago

"Wait a minute".....nice irony

ID2463357 Pesmog
 5d ago

You can also walk a minute...

• Felipe1st

5d ago

Reminds me of, 'The Death Instinct, by Jed Rubenfeld' featuring the Wall Street bombing in the 1920s.

rompersuncle

5d ago

"the real story"??

except for the one fact about the observatory gates, there's nothing but speculation here.

tho i guess the concept of someone trying to blow up another concept--GMT--has some artistic merit.

beckyfhrompersuncle5d ago

Well, facts about who the real bomber was, what he did that day, who found him, where he was walking, what happened to him, links to the archive and other reports, information about why Greenwich had particular significance at the end of the 19th century.... Apart from that, nothing. I'm sorry that Bourdin didn't leave more information for you.

marknickless

5d ago

Does anyone read Conrad anymore. I do not know or care about the actual conspiracy, but this novel is one of the most impressive I have read. It is not the greatest, but it has endured in my consciousness.

ID2463357 marknickless

5d ago

Sure people read Conrad. And they can do it for free at Project Gutenberg:

http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/search/?query=joseph+conrad

martinushermarknickless5d ago

He's one of my favorite authors. A Pole/Ukraine by birth ("borders were a bit fluid back then"), he traveled to Western Europe to seek fame and fortune, first to France and then England by way of service in the merchant marine. His transnational experience gives quite a modern edge to his work, he's English at the height of Empire but at the same time lacking all the jingoism you'd expect from a dyed-in-the-wool upper class Brit such as HH Munro ("Saki").

casaleiro

5d ago

Thanks for this uncommonly well-made article, and for some very interesting historical background to my favourite Conrad novel.

• spitfire43

5d ago

Some of it was filmed (I think) at Glasgow Kelvingrove Museum (as the railway station) and some other locations looked suspiciously Scottish (Glasgow City Chambers?). I felt that the series did not do justice to Conrad's powerful work while being a bit lightweight as a 'thriller'.

beckyfhspitfire435d ago

Quite a lot was filmed at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich (perhaps including the suspiciously Scottish bits?). It's site well used for TV and film locations

• edgware9

5d ago

I enjoyed it, tad slow with some longueurs but it would have been better as a 2hour 1 part show. The interiors of Kelvingrove gave a feeling of 19th century opulence were good optics but oh dear, a British Railways logo on the train tender was a careless goof.

Euphobia1

5d ago

To my failure I find Conrad unreadable! I had to study *The Rover* for GCE a long time ago and I never finished or understood it. I was but 15 at the time. A bit young.

Sadly I found this series unwatchable too, but I feel sure the fault is mine. It is almost *kafkaesque* in its depiction of what ordinary people will do if pushed! It is too uncomfortable to look at. It touches a nerve I do not want to irritate.

One day perhaps.

martinusher Euphobia15d ago

Conrad's "The Secret Agent" is a very readable tale that was partly inspired by the incident described above. The actual explosion is only a very small part of the story. The lives and interplay of the characters are very interesting, the end a bit flat (but almost inevitable).

I haven't seen this particular adaptation yet but I don't think I'd like it too much from the still of Toby Jones, this is not how I would picture Verloc from the story. Its possible that this time, being now over 100 years ago, has become a sort of fair-tale existence, a cartoon of real life, because there's nobody around to remember how real it was.

adjohns

4d ago

One interesting thing about the real bombing is that when the sound of the blast was heard inside the observatory the initial, instinctive reaction of the astronomers was to record the exact time. That's what well-trained astronomers were supposed to do, after all. It means that this is perhaps the first such incident of which we know the time to the second.

John Hunter

4d ago

The 1996 version of The Secret Agent was a much more true to the novel.

It starred Robin Williams as the Assassin and Eddie Izzard as Vladimir, Bob Hoskins as Verloc, Gérard Depardieu as Ossipon, Patricia Arquette as Winnie.

But in a moment of total idiocy the powers in charge decided that the original billboard on the release of the film should not mention some famous actors names as that would give the wrong impression of the nature of the film and attract the wrong audience who might feel disappointed.

The unbilled Robin Williams were grim and effective in his portrayal as the Professor, who walks the city with bombs strapped to his body, he was at moments unforgettable, even dramatically epic in one scene, portraying the character more of a suicidal nihilist than just an anarchist.

Reinterpretations and adaptations of novels such as Joseph Conrads are popular and I understand that there are many that want to purge them or edit them from the not so politically correct terms, descriptions and words that would be banned by those who have heightened cultural sensitivities, but is often said that the genius and raw real life experiences that these novelist experienced and captured is lost in some fuzzy woolly meaningless were costume and wardrobe design is more important than character portrayal.

Conrad's novella Heart of Darkness that was adapted into Apocalypse Now was selected for preservation in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress, for films deemed "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant".

The screenplay by John Milius and Coppola updates the setting of Joseph Conrad's novella Heart of Darkness to that of the Vietnam War. Although I agree is a brilliant and significant film for its time, again, I feel using words like "it updates the setting" culturally hijacked the message from its true "scene of the crime" Africa.

Because firstly, it was exposing the horror of horrific colonialism and secondly, I feel that really understanding the characters in their historical context can teach us more about people than some blarney socio-psychological-anthropologic and cultural interaction textbooks can ever hope to achieve.

But still I enjoy the new series as well.

SergeyL

4d ago

Taking into account that it's BBC and UK I would suggest that in real life Winter Palace was blown up by British agent.

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Haunted by the ghost of Jacob Mouse

1 day ago yorkpress.co.uk

THE PRESS

DO you recall Jacob Marley, a ghost in Christmas Carol, who clanked into Ebenezer Scrooge's

Dale Lowther

nightmare to remind him of the wrongs he was committing?

Well, I fear I will soon be haunted. Not because of any miserliness, I don't think I can be accused of that, profligacy on occasions, but miserliness no, but because of great crimes I have committed against our local mouse population.

It all started when John reared a small flock of partridges in the grain store for a friend who runs a shoot. The partridge chicks were first housed in a shed under infra red lights and them progressed to a run outside, but still inside, the store.

The partridges have now gone to be released in the fields and wood that the shoot shoots over, but one of the legacies of their habitation in the store

was a thriving community of mice. All pleasantly plump from the good eating they had been provided with by the ad lib game feed crumbs.

Millie, our Jack Russell, longed to get into the grain store and chase and snap up the mice, but they soon learned to evade her by nipping under the shed floor or into the partridge run.

From where they demonstrated the equivalent of a "yah, boo, sucks" snub to an enraged terrier.

Once the partridges left and the grain store cleaned out for corn from the harvest, the mice seems to disappear.

There was a brief killing spree when the floor of the hut was lifted by the tractor's forklift, but then the mouse population apparently disappeared into thin air. Or did it?

John had put down a bait station behind two of the freezers I had sneaked into a corner of the grain store as I had no room for another one (or even two) in the pantry. But although the poison seems to be being taken, not a sign of a deceased mouse.

But behind and under all the fixtures and fittings in the store, clear evidence of a mouse population explosion was beginning to accumulate in the form of a multitude of mouse droppings. And with the tip up of corn now in the shed from harvest, drastic action was needed.

So I raided the loft rooms where a number of mouse traps are always set in case we have little visitors and baited five traps with prime Red Leicester cheese. Next morning five little mouse corpses, each one parted from this life with their little jaws clapped round a morsel of cheese.

Next morning another five. And then another. Thirty mice so far this week and then this morning, only four mice and one trap completely disappeared.

I have searched high and low. Under the freezers, under John's work bench, behind where the partridge shed is stacked (in pieces) and everywhere else I can think of in the store. Not a whisker.

So tonight when my sleep is disturbed by the shuffling, rattling and scraping of a mouse trap across the bedroom floor, I know who it will be. The ghost of Jacob Mouse.

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Headstone of Civil War soldier to be fixed after 154 years

yahoo.com

Ap August 27, 2016

Asso COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Some mistakes are never too late to fix.

A Civil War soldier misidentified when he was buried at an Ohio cemetery more than 150 years ago is to get a new headstone.

Confederate soldier Augustus Beckmann was fatally wounded in the Battle of Shiloh on April 7, 1862. But he was buried at the Camp Chase Confederate Cemetery in Columbus under the wrong name, A. Bergman, and wrong company, The Columbus Dispatch reports (http://bit.ly/2bzX8Ji).

Beckmann's brother's great-great-grandson, Greg Beckman, discovered the error when he visited Camp Chase last Memorial Dav.

Beckman, who teaches government at a high school in Placentia, California, pulled together the necessary documentation and asked the National Cemetery Administration to fix the headstone. He recently learned his request was approved.

An administration spokeswoman says approved stones are typically in place within 60 days.

Beckman's great-great grandfather, William Beckmann, was Augustus' brother. The two came to America from present-day Germany between 1858 and 1860 and enlisted in the 2nd Texas Infantry in Galveston.

"William never learned the fate of his brother, as August was buried under the wrong surname of Bergman all those years," Beckman said. "The last time they saw one another was on the battlefield of Shiloh."

August Beckmann was buried under the name Bergman at Camp Dennison near Cincinnati, and the incorrect name followed him when his remains and those of 30 other soldiers were removed in 1869 and reinterred at Camp Chase.

Beckman said he was happy to visit his relative's gravesite, but wasn't content with the incorrect inscription.

"I knew something had to be done about it," he said.

Information from: The Columbus Dispatch, http://www.dispatch.com

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stuff Somebody's heart was left in a field in Ohio but whose is it? PETER HOLLEY

Last updated 09:02, September 12 2016

Only an hour earlier, the field beside a convenience store parking lot in Norwalk, Ohio was empty.

An Emergency Medical Services crew from the small US town, 100 kilometres southwest of Cleveland, had been parked nearby on August 25 and left after receiving a call for service.

When they returned in their ambulance, police told the *Norwalk Reflector*, there was a mysterious bag sitting in the field.

Upon investigating, the crew members found themselves staring at what appeared to be a human heart.

"It was fresh; it wasn't decomposed," Norwalk, Ohio, Police Chief Dave Light told the Reflector.

Detective Sergeant Jim Fulton told the paper that probably an hour had passed between the time the crew left the parking lot and returned.

"After they returned, it was there," Fulton said. "It was just a little ways into that field off the parking lot. It was in a plastic bag."

The paramedics called police, who picked up the heart and transported it to the county coroner's office for testing the next day.

Authorities say they are confident that the heart is human, which raises a troubling question: To who does the heart belong?

Police told the *Reflector* that they're not aware of any cases in which a heart has been stolen, nor do they have any reports of grave robberies or bodies being tampered with.

"I haven't heard anything like that," Light told the paper, noting that he'd hoped local media coverage might lead someone to step forward with information about a missing organ.

Jill Del Greco, a spokeswoman for the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation, told the paper that her agency is not investigating any cases involving a missing heart.

"We wouldn't necessarily hear about it," Del Greco told the *Reflector*. "Most cases are handled at the local level."

Light admitted that the paramedics who found the heart could not be certain it was human in origin.

Pigs, chimpanzees and dogs all have hearts that can resemble human hearts.

"Pig hearts are promising because they're close enough to human hearts in anatomy," *Popular Science* reported in an article about the possibility of using animal hearts as transplants for human patients.

"Doctors also already use heart valves taken from pigs and cows in human surgeries."

On any given day, about 3000 people in the United States are on the waiting list for a heart transplant, but only about 2000 hearts become available each year, according to the US National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute.

Wait times can last from several days to several months, the institute notes, and can hinge upon someone's medical condition and blood type.

Huron County, Ohio, coroner Jeff Harwood told the *Reflector* that when he first encountered the heart "it was in pretty good condition," but the organ "had an odour of decomposition to it."

He noted that nobody had been in touch with him to claim the heart.

Asked whether he could be certain that the heart was human, the coroner said, "I could not say it was not, so that's why we shipped it off."

"They wanted to do some tests on the fluid to see if it's a preservative," he added.

Police told the paper that the coroner's office performed a biopsy before sending the heart to a veterinarian for additional analysis.

"They're 95 per cent sure it was human," Light told the *Reflector*, "but they want to make 100 per cent sure."

Tracing body parts is a task that police sometimes find themselves engaged in. In June, police in Penn Township, Pennsylvania, discovered a human brain beneath a robbery suspect's porch.

The brain even had a name: "Freddy."

Police say the name was given to the brain by Joshua Lee Long, who is incarcerated in connection with burglaries in Pennsylvania, according to the Sentinel.

Police think the brain was stolen.

Cumberland County Coroner Charley Hall confirmed that the brain belonged to an adult human.

Pennsylvania state trooper Bob Hicks told television station WPMT that investigators think the brain was originally used for teaching purposes.

Police accused Long of using the brain to get high by spraying the organ's embalming fluid on marijuana.

"At this point now, we're just trying to figure out where it came from," he said.

"We're hoping that if anyone feels like they're missing a human specimen brain, bring it to our attention and maybe we could return it to its rightful owner."

- The Washington Post

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This undated photo provided by Tamara Schmitz shows Clydesdale horse Budweiser with his friend, a Nigerian dwarf billy goat named Lancelot, near Santa Cruz, Calif. Budweiser was safely back in his pen Sunday, Aug. 28, 2016, in the Santa Cruz Mountains on California's Central Coast after five days on the lam. Owner Tamara Schmitz says Buddy was busted out Wednesday, Aug. 24, by Lancelot, who knows how to butt open the stable gate. (Tamara Schultz via AP)

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. (AP) — A dwarf billy goat gave new meaning to the word "scapegoat" when he busted out a surprisingly slippery Clydesdale that went on the lam in California for several days.

The nearly 1-ton horse named Budweiser, who goes by src="https://s.yimg.com/ny/api/res/1.2/91CZK2WuK90gyt8K6PIQJ/" Buddy," was safely wrangled back into his pen Sunday in the Santa Cruz Mountains on California's Central Coast.

The goat named Lancelot knows how to butt open the stable gate, and did just that Wednesday, letting his best friend escape, owner Tamara Schmitz told the Santa Cruz Sentinel newspaper (http://bit.ly/2bPTgBD).

Another Clydesdale, Harry, also fled and was nabbed in a meadow the next day. But Buddy is more wary and wily, Schmitz said.

"Buddy's very elusive," she said. "He's not like other horses. He's not attracted by meadows and other horses. He can stay hidden."

That made him very hard to find. He eluded volunteers from around the Santa Cruz area for five days, with evidence like tracks and loud snorts suggesting he was as far as 3 miles away.

The owners even trotted out Lancelot and Harry to try to lure back Buddy, but he didn't fall for it. They just hoped the horse would stay away from Highway 17, a busy and dangerous road running through the area.

A pair of searchers on horseback finally found Buddy hiding amid manzanita shrubs Sunday.

"When we got him back in the pen, he was particularly frisky and playful and happy," Schmitz said. "I think he was glad to be back."

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Hemingway home gets back antlers taken by Hunter S. Thompson

August 18, 2016 yahoo.com



TAKES OUT REFERENCE TO ASSISTANT REGIONAL LIBRARIAN - Anita Thompson, left, is joined by Library Executive Director Jenny Emery Davidson, middle, and Program Manager Scott Burton as they pose with trophy antlers while returning them to the former home of writer Ernest Hemingway Aug. 5, 2016, in Ketchum, Idaho. Gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson so admired the set of trophy elk antlers when he visited the central Idaho home of Hemingway, that he stole them. More than half a century later, The Community Library has returned the antlers.(Christina Jensen/The Community Library via AP)

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — A young Hunter S. Thompson went to Idaho to write about Ernest Hemingway and decided to take a piece of

his hero home with him — a set of trophy elk antlers.

More than half a century later, the gonzo journalist's wife returned the antlers to Hemingway's house in the mountain town of Ketchum.

"He was embarrassed that he took them," Anita Thompson told The Associated Press on Thursday, noting the deep respect her husband had for Hemingway's work. "He wished he hadn't taken them. He was young, it was 1964, and he got caught up in the moment.

"He talked about it several times, about taking a road trip and returning them," she said.

She gave back the antlers Aug. 5 to Ketchum Community Library, which helps catalog and preserve items in the residence where the author took his own life. It's now owned by the Nature Conservancy.

In 1964, Hunter Thompson, then 27, came to Ketchum when he was still a conventional journalist. He had not yet developed his signature style, dubbed gonzo journalism, that involved inserting himself, often outrageously, into his reporting and that propelled him into a larger-than-life figure.

Thompson was writing a story for the National Observer about why the globe-trotting Hemingway shot and killed himself at his home three years earlier at age 61. Thompson attributed the suicide in part to rapid changes in the world that led to upheavals in places Hemingway loved most — Africa and Cuba.

Even Ketchum, which in the 1930s and 1940s attracted luminaries such as Gary Cooper, had fallen off the map of cafe society by the late 1950s, Thompson wrote.

In the story, later collected in his book "The Great Shark Hunt," he noted the problem of tourists taking chunks of earth from around Hemingway's grave as souvenirs.

Early in the piece, he wrote about the large elk antlers over Hemingway's front door but never mentioned taking them.

For decades, the antlers hung in a garage at Thompson's home near Aspen, Colorado.

"One of the stories that has often been told over the years is the story of Hunter S. Thompson taking the antlers," said the library's Jenny Emery Davidson, who helped accept the trophy. "These are two great literary figures who came together over the item of the antlers."

Davidson said historian Douglas Brinkley, who spoke at the library in May and was familiar with the antler story after interviewing the writer, contacted Anita Thompson. She called the library on Aug. 1.

Davidson said the antlers have since been shipped to a Hemingway grandson in New York who wanted them. It's not clear if the antlers came from an elk killed by the author, who was a noted big game hunter, or if they were a gift.

Sean Hemingway didn't respond to emails or phone messages seeking comment.

Like Ernest Hemingway, Thompson ended his own life by shooting himself, dying in 2005 at age 67 at his Colorado home.

His widow wants to turn the house where he lived and worked into a museum, planning to open it next year by invitation only. Like Hemingway's home, it's much the same as it was when Thompson was alive.

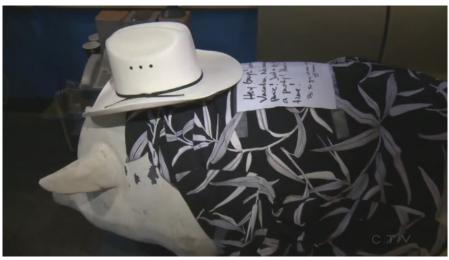
"I couldn't open it with a clear conscious knowing there's a stolen pair of antlers," Anita Thompson said, noting the theft was unusual behavior, even by her husband's standards.

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This little piggy came home: Prized pig to return to Unicorn Pub

Last Updated Friday, August 26, 2016 9:27AM MDT

calgary.ctvnews.ca



CTV Calgary: Henry the pig heads home

Henry the Pig will be headed home after an unknown person dropped the statue off at a local radio station. Jordan Kanygin reports.

Henry the fibreglass pig will soon be back home at the Unicorn Pub after a patron removed the ornamental porker Sunday morning. Late Thursday evening, Henry appeared on the loading dock of a local radio

station and it appears he had had quite an adventure.

Early Sunday, approaching last call, Henry was removed from the Stephen Avenue establishment.

Photos



Henry the pig returned

Henry the pig returned



Henry the pig returned

Henry the pig returned



Pig stolen from pub

The Unicorn Pub on 8 Street S.W. is seeking the safe return of Henry, a 30 pound fibreglass pig that was stolen over the weekend.



Graeme Reaper - CJAY92

Graeme Reaper, CJAY92, say Henry the Pig will be returned to the Unicorn Pub once the anonymous caller brings the swine statue to the station

Mel Lafleur, corporate chef of the Unicorn Pub, appealed on social media for the safe return of the decoration that had been a fixture of the business.

Our beloved pig Henry was taken from us yesterday. If seen please call @unicorncalgary #bringhenryhome pic.twitter.com/JUCMDnoGPa

— Mel Lafleur (@meltheflower) August 24, 2016

Surveillance cameras captured a heavy-set man sitting on the pig when he was joined by two friends. The trio left the Unicorn with Henry.

On Thursday afternoon, an unnamed person contacted CJAY92, a local radio station, stating Henry had been "found" by "a friend".

"One of your buddies has Henry? How does that happen?" asked Graeme Reaper, CJAY92 host.

"I'm not really sure and I don't really like to ask questions" said the caller.

The person agreed to bring the pig to the radio station and CJAY92 staff said they would reward the deed. "We're not sure when, he was pretty avant garde about the whole thing," said Reaper. "He just wanted to clear the air."

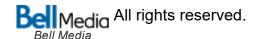
Late Thursday evening, Henry turned up on the CJAY92 loading dock sporting a Hawaiian shirt and a note that read:

"Hey Guys! Just went on a vacation. No need to panic! Just a pig looking for a party! Had a wicked time! P.S: The guys with me was jacked! NOT heavy set!"

The folks at CJAY92 plan to escort Henry back to the Unicorn Pub on Friday morning.

CTV Calgary and CJAY92 are subsidiaries of Bell Media.

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stuff BENN BATHGATE

Last updated 14:27, September 5 2016



Benn Bathgate After five months hibernation, Herman is ready for her close up.



Benn Bathgate Herman the Tortoise and owner Alf Hoyle.

Forget about MetService, Herman the Tortoise knows we're in for a great summer this year.

Herman's owner Alf Hoyle said Herman awoke from her winter hibernation "bang on time" on Monday, a signal that good weather is on the way.

"We're in for a good summer," Hoyle said.

"She seems to know."

Hoyle said Herman - named before her gender was known - went into her annual hibernation on April 4.

"Quite late this year, signalling we'd have a reasonable winter," he said.

Herman hibernates in a specially made box in Hoyle's garden which is stuffed with hay, and he said they usually know when it's time for her to wake up when they can hear a rustling sound.

However, Herman had other ideas this year.

"She'd broken out. She'd pushed the board just enough to climb out. She's a great escape artist."

Hoyle acquired Herman more than 50 years ago from the Welsh Mountain Zoo after getting a special import permit and said she's been an accurate weather forecaster ever since.

He said she'd spend the next few days basking in the sun and catching up on her food, with strawberries, sweetcorn and cucumber particular favourites.

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Hidden cemetery at Aquinas College details early Nashville history

Posted: Sept. 02, 2016 commercial appeal.com



Posted: Sept. 02, 2016

By Adam Tamburin, USA TODAY NETWORK — Tennessee



Archaeologists search a site at Aquinas College on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2016, after construction crews found tombstones near a new residence hall being built on campus. (George Walker IV / USA TODAY NETWORK — Tennessee)

Construction was wrapping up at Aquinas College last month when a worker leveling the ground in front of a new residence hall saw something unusual peeking through the soil.

A closer look confirmed the project to construct the college's first new building in nearly four decades was far from over.

A tombstone more than 140 years old was visible through the churned earth, the first evidence of a small family cemetery that had been buried for generations under a gravel parking lot near the college's tennis courts.

The stone's inscription was simple, but it has set off a flurry of interest among the area's history aficionados: "Charles Bosley, who died Oct. 19, 1870. Aged 93

yrs."

Bosley was a member of one of Nashville's prominent early families.

His farm once stood where the Dominican Campus is today — Bosley Springs Road down the street from the campus, between Saint Thomas West Hospital and a Taco Bell, also would have fallen on his sprawling property. He was well known at the time, local historians agree, with a Tennessean article from 1963 describing him as "a man who was both rugged and rich."

The discovery of the Bosley family cemetery quickly halted the final phase of work surrounding Siena Hall, Aquinas' first new building in 39 years. Construction crew leaders contacted the Davidson County medical examiner, who pointed them to a division of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

Ben Nance, a historical archaeologist with the department, took a look and advised the college to hire a private firm to continue excavation. He located two grave shafts in the cemetery, but he said they were likely to find more.

Archaeologists with TRC Companies Inc. used a backhoe, shovels and other tools to determine exactly how many people had been buried there. So far, they've found 10 gravesites and five markers, including markers for Bosley's wife and his infant daughter, Mary, who died in 1825 at age 1.

Jared Barrett, a TRC archaeologist who also has worked on a handful of other high-profile projects in Nashville, described each new find as a cause for celebration.

"You still get that thrill when you find something that someone hasn't seen in over 100 years," he said.

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"You still get that thrill when you find something that someone hasn't seen in over 100 years," he said.

No one at Aquinas had a clue the cemetery sat just below the surface of the planned green space.

A local descendant of the Bosleys said the discovery surprised her, too.

"I think everyone's just excited to know what's right under the ground," said Eleanor Whitworth Bosley, who described Charles Bosley as "four greats back — and maybe five" in her family tree. "And here it is my own family in my own town."

Whitworth Bosley said she believed the bodies in the family cemetery were moved some time ago and that the graveyard had been forgotten. The archaeologists will prepare a final report after their work is done that might indicate if any bodies still remain there.

Sister Mary Sarah Galbraith, president of Aquinas, said she wasn't sure how the discovery of the cemetery would impact plans for a quad on campus. She said that decision would be tabled until she could meet with Whitworth Bosley to discuss the family's wishes.

Historic records suggest local land was given to Charles Bosley's father in return for his service in the American Revolution.

Bosley went on to become a successful trader and plantation owner. He owned about 2,000 acres in Davidson County, including the Bosley farm, where Aquinas now sits, and left about \$20,000 in gold to his granddaughter when he died, according to Metro archivist Ken Fieth.

"He seems to have been respected, in the tone and content of newspaper accounts," Carroll Van West, Tennessee state historian and director of the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University, wrote in an email. "But then as the estate changed hands after his 1870 death, and then becomes part of the suburban growth of Nashville in early 20th century, he becomes forgotten."

Galbraith admitted she didn't know much about the property's history beyond 1923, when the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation purchased the land. But, since the discovery, history buffs across the region have

been sending research on the Bosley family and early Nashville.

She said she hoped the discovery would open the door to an educational opportunity, for her students and for the broader community.

"When something like this happens it's wonderful to see how the community gathers around it. Everybody is surprised and wants to help put the puzzle together," Galbraith said. "To have a city father buried on our property and to have that be a surprise, it's been an enormous blessing to all of us."

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00:44 EST, 29 August 2016 | dailymail.co.uk



MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories



Petty Officer Second Class Kao Chia-chun has been charged over the missile launch fatality

An unsupervised Taiwanese naval officer who experimented with a missile launcher and accidentally fired towards China was one of three people charged on Monday over the fatal incident.

Naval officer Kao Chiachun decided to practise at

the controls of the supersonic 'aircraft carrier killer' without a supervisor last month - launching the missile into a Taiwanese trawler, killing the skipper and injuring three crew.

The misfiring of the The Hsiung-feng III (Brave wind) missile struck a damaging blow to the Taiwanese military's image, embarrassing new president Tsai Ing-wen and angering Beijing.

Kao was charged with negligence leading to death and injuries, as well as damaging weaponry.

His supervisor Chen Ming-hsiu and lieutenant Hsu Po-wei, who was responsible for overseeing weapons, were charged with neglecting official public duties leading to catastrophe.

Prosecutors in the southern port city of Kaoshiung revealed on Monday that Kao had been left alone in the master control room for as long as seven minutes.



A model of a home-grown supersonic Hsiung-feng III (Brave Wind) ship-to-ship missile is seen in Taipei during a military parade

Kao decided to practise without a supervisor, despite the system being in 'combat mode', prosecutors said in a statement marking the end of their investigation.

'(He) did not ultimately notice that missiles no.3 and no.4 were already in 'live-fire' mode and went on to press...'allow launch', 'launch missile', and 'confirm'', prosecutors stated.

One of the missiles travelled for about two minutes, automatically searching for a target before locking onto the fishing boat in the waters off Taiwan-administered

Penghu island.

The misfire - the biggest military slip-up since Beijing-sceptic Tsai came to power in May - sparked an uproar in Taiwan and drew a stern rebuke from China.

Chen should have been supervising but left Kao alone during the incident on July 1, the statement said.

President Tsai last week called for the defence ministry to hammer out a new strategy and improve its performance, while attending an annual military exercise simulating China attacks.



Kao was charged with negligence leading to death and injuries, and damaging weaponry



Taiwanese
President Tsai
Ing-wen speaks
during the annual
Han Guang lifefire drill in
southern
Pingtung, on
August 25

The mainland is the biggest military threat to self-ruling Taiwan, which Beijing sees

as a breakaway province to be reunified.

Tensions have risen across the strait under Tsai as Beijing does not trust her traditionally pro-independence party.

According to Taiwan's defence ministry, there are 1,500 Chinese missiles aimed at the island.

China launched some of the missiles into waters off Taiwan in 1995 and 1996 in an attempt to deter voters in the island's first democratic presidential elections.

Last month's misfire coincided with China celebrating the 95th anniversary of the Communist Party.



Comments (50)

ProperAngry, Weirdo-super-Mare, United Kingdom, about an hour ago

Oopsies!!

watfordgal, watford, United Kingdom, about 5 hours ago

Talk about a bad day at the office.

The Joker222, Canberra, Australia, about 7 hours ago

If that is all the damage the missile did to a fishing boat it sure won't be worrying an aircraft carrier.

mirzza1, Dreams, India, about 15 hours ago

Probably he was playing game of thrones in real!

Axeformen, Definately not Luton anymore., United Kingdom, about 17 hours ago

Deadly weapon? Are there any others types DM?

BillShanks99, Guess, United Kingdom, about 15 hours ago

Yes. The spoken words.

paddyleeds1, leeds, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

and not any sympathy for the 24 tuna it killed too

Cryptic Mick, Ipswich, United Kingdom, about 20 hours ago

8/30/2016 Taiwanese officer accidentally hit a fishing boat with a missile and killed a sailor while he was 'experimenting' with the deadly weapon | Daily Mail Online

Whoops. Imagine the RN sinking a boat load of economic migrants by accident.

paddyleeds1, leeds, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

we have not got enough missiles to misfire??

Chat2206, Melbourne, Australia, about 16 hours ago

Typical arrogant British bullcrap! No wonder you caused all wars everywhere!

Hamada Demene, ny, United States, about 20 hours ago

Greyworm, Chatham, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

Whooping do . .

Paul_Xavier_Green, Geostationary Orbit - Wembley, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

WARNING: The same old online scam artist using a multitude of identities. Avoid this creature at all costs - you will be ripped off, every time!!!

Disgusted, Royal Tunbridge Wells, about 20 hours ago

You had one job!!

Disgusted, Royal Tunbridge Wells, about 20 hours ago

I believe the culprit was a chap called Hoo Flung Bang

paddyleeds1, leeds, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

no it was his mate hoo flung dung

Published by Associated Newspapers Ltd

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Fugitive nearly evades police using 'Hollywood quality' disguise

August 21 at 11:42 AM washingtonpost.com

The Washington Post



Police say Shaun Miller, 30, disguised himself as an elderly man to evade capture. Miller had been a fugitive since April, police said. (Courtesy of Bamstable police)

Shaun "Shizz" Miller was desperate.

Police had surrounded his residence in South Yarmouth, Mass., and were demanding that the alleged drug trafficker — a fugitive for months — come outside.

Miller did exactly that, but not before slipping on a wrinkled, liver-spotted mask that added about a half-century to the 30-year-old's face.

It was a criminal Hail Mary, to be sure, and it worked — for a time.



Police say Shaun Miller used this realistic mask to conceal his identity. (Courtesy of Barnstable police) reported.

"Upon further investigation, officers determined that the 'elderly man' was in fact Miller, and at that point, officers pulled off Miller's realistic disguise and placed him under arrest," a statement released by U.S. Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz said.

Miller may have been caught, but his strategy seemed to impress the arresting officers.

"It was Hollywood quality," Barnstable police Lt. Mark Mellyn told the Cape Cod Times, referring to the mask. "It was unbelievable."

Officers searching Miller's home discovered two loaded weapons hidden in a laundry basket and nearly \$30,000 in cash, according to the statement.

In April, Miller was charged with possession of heroin with intent to distribute, the statement said.

Miller had eluded police since that month, when drug raids that netted 19 people associated with the Hyannis, Mass.,-based "Nauti-Block" gang began, the Times

The gang had risen to regional prominence in recent years, according to the Times.

"Although it had not been classified as a gang until then, its members' close ties and organized drug-related crimes dated back to their youth growing up in the Nautical Road area of the village," the paper reported.

"Early on, members of the Nauti-Block gang called themselves 'The Big Dogs' and racked up multiple assault arrests, including charges from a 2008 brawl at the Cape Cod Mall with another local crew in which three men were stabbed in retaliation for a previous incident.

"It was that year when Barnstable police began noticing them, as they were responsible for much of the violence in the Sea Street and Main Street area of Hyannis, Deputy Police Chief Sean Balcom

said. That disruption led to formation of the Street Crime Unit in 2010, he said."

Authorities told the Times that they had been watching the home of Miller's mother for some time before finally surrounding it on Thursday after confirming that a man spotted at the home was, in fact, Miller.

When officers ordered the occupants of the home outside, the Times reported, Miller — disguised as an elderly man — exited the front door "relatively quickly" while his mother exited the back of the home. Police told the paper that they suspect the mother and son were trying to confuse police.

Mellyn told the paper that Miller — wearing the mask, a hat and a jacket — began talking to officers immediately. The alleged senior citizen had been taken into custody to be debriefed when officers became suspicious, Mellyn said. The old man had \$10,000 on him and there was something strange about the edges of his eyes.

"He was probably expecting us to move him outside the danger zone," Mellyn told the paper, noting that Miller would've used that opportunity to escape.

Miller refused to speak with officers after being arrested, the Times reported.

He is scheduled to appear in U.S. District Court in Boston on Aug. 31.

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Holy spud? Quebec seniors say they've found a potato with divine message

ottawasun.com



First posted: Friday, September 02, 2016 09:19 PM EDT | Updated: Friday, September 02, 2016 09:25 PM EDT



The residents of a Quebec seniors' home say a potato they believe has a divine message is bringing them strength and comfort.

The cook at the centre was slicing potatoes Aug. 22 when he accidentally — some might say miraculously — made a perfect lengthwise cut, revealing what he would later describe as a sign of the cross in the centre of each half.

"He was flabbergasted and surprised, but happy at the same time, because anyone who is Christian would say that's a sign," said Emilien Morin, head of

the residents' committee of the La Rive residence in Grande-Riviere in eastern Quebec.

Morin said most of the home's 22 residents are Roman Catholic and were equally impressed by the discovery.

"People are positive, they think it brings them confidence," he said.

"It's a sign of destiny and it brings safety and comfort."

Morin says the residents are currently drying the potato in order to preserve it.

They will eventually display it in a case with some historical information about when and where it was found.

He says it's not uncommon to find holes and shapes in the middle of spuds but he believes the cross is unusual.

"I'm 80 years old, and it's the first time I've seen anything like this," he said.

He says the residents are hoping the potato is bearing a divine message, although Morin isn't sure what it might mean.

"Who knows?" he said. "Maybe it will bring nothing. It's only a potato."

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Homemade flamethrower used to kill cockroaches sparks fire

August 8, 2016 yahoo.com

CENTRALIA, Wash. (AP) — Fire officials in Centralia say a resident sparked a small fire in an apartment while trying to kill cockroaches with a homemade flamethrower.

KOMO-TV reports (http://bit.ly/2b3lr10) that fire crews were called to the apartment on Monday morning after receiving a report of a commercial structure fire.

By the time firefighters arrived, the resident had extinguished the flames. No one was injured.

A preliminary investigation found that the resident was using bug spray and a lighter to create a flamethrower for killing cockroaches. That sparked the fire.

It's not clear whether any cockroaches were actually killed in the process.

Information from: KOMO-TV, http://www.komotv.com/

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The Devil's Promenade and the Hornet Spook Light



LEGENDS OF AMERICA





MISSOURI LEGENDS

Devil's Promenade & the Hornet Spook Light



Spook Light Postcard

Bobbing and bouncing along a dirt road in northeast Oklahoma is the Hornet Spook Light, a paranormal enigma for more than a century. Described most often as an orange ball of light, the orb travels from east to west along a four mile gravel road, long called the Devil's Promenade by area locals.

The Spook Light, often referred to as the Joplin Spook Light or the Tri-State Spook Light is actually in Oklahoma near the small town of Quapaw. However, it is most often seen from the east, which is why it has been "attached" to the tiny hamlet of Hornet, Missouri and the larger better known town of Joplin.

According to the legend, the spook light was first seen by Indians along the infamous Trail of Tears in 1836; however, the first "official" report occurred in 1881 in a publication called the Ozark Spook Light.

The ball of fire, described as varying from the size of a baseball to a basketball, dances and spins down the center of the road at high speeds, rising and hovering above the treetops, before it retreats and disappears. Others have said it sways from side to side, like a lantern being carried by some invisible force. In any event, the orange fire-like ball has reportedly been appearing nightly for well over a one hundred years. According to locals, the best time to view the spook light is between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and midnight and tends to shy away from large groups and loud sounds.

Though many paranormal and scientific investigators have studied the light, including the Army Corps of Engineers, no one has been able to provide a conclusive answer as to the origin of the light.

Many explanations have been presented over the years including escaping natural gas, reflecting car lights and billboards, and will-o'-the-wisps, a luminescence created by rotting organic matter. However, all of these explanations all fall short of being conclusive.

As to the theory of escaping natural gas, which is common in marshy areas, the Hornet Light is seemingly not affected by wind or by rain, and how would it self-ignite? The idea that it might be a will-o'-the-wisp is discounted, as this biological phenomena does not display the intensity of the ball of light seen along the Devil's Promenade. Explanations of headlights or billboards are easily discarded, as the light was seen years before automobiles or billboards were made, and before a road even existed in the area.

One possible explanation that is not as easily discounted, but not yet proven conclusive, is that the lights are electrical atmospheric charges. In areas where rocks, deep below the earth's surface, are shifting and grinding, an electrical charge can be created. This area, lying on a fault line running east from New Madrid, Missouri, westward to Oklahoma was the site of four earthquakes during the eighteenth century. These types of electrical fields are most commonly associated with earthquakes.

Other interesting legends also abound about the light that provide a more ghostly explanation. The oldest is the story of a Quapaw Indian maiden who fell in love with a young brave. However, her father would not allow her to marry the man as he did not have a large enough dowry. The pair eloped but were soon pursued by a party of warriors. According to the legend, when the couple was close to being apprehended, they joined hands above the Spring River and leaped to their deaths. It was shortly after this event, that the light began to appear and was attributed to the spirits of the young lovers.

Another legend tells of a miner whose cabin was attacked by Indians while he was away. Upon his return, he found his wife and children missing and is said to continue looking for them along the old road, searching with his lantern.

Others say the Spook Light is the ghost of an Osage Indian chief who was decapitated in the area and continues to search for his lost head, with a lantern held high in his hand.

Sightings of the Spook Light are common, sometimes even reported to be seen inside vehicles. A few people, who have been walking along the road at night, have even claimed to have felt the heat of the ball as it passed near them.

Reportedly, the moving anomaly, growing brighter and dimmer, larger and smaller, can be seen approximately twelve miles southwest of Joplin, Missouri. To get to Devil's Promenade Road, take Interstate 44 west from Joplin but before you reach the Oklahoma border, take the next to the



Devil's Promenade near Joplin, Missouri

last Missouri exit onto Star Route 43. Traveling south for Devil's Promenade by day. about four miles, you will reach a crossroads which is Devil's Promenade Road.

© Kathy Weiser/Legends of America, updated November, 2009

Reader's Story from Hornet, Missouri

I was doing some walking down memory lane this evening and came across your website about the old Hornet Spook Light. Your site seems to be one of the few that is updated, and I thought I would share my story of the Spook Light.

My dad was born in Seneca, near Hornet and Joplin. In fact, our family cemetery is in Hornet - generations of folks who lived and died on the prairie. It is a really amazing place. My dad is something of an adventurer, and I think he got that from his mom. She would tell us amazing and hilarious stories of cows jumping through the barn window, the wagon turning over and dumping everyone out on their way to church, and of surviving countless tornadoes in "tornado alley."

I remember my grandmother telling her story of the Spook Light. It seems that when she was in high school, it was common for buses to take tourists - and locals - to see the light.

The night she went they had a truly close encounter. It seems the light not only appeared, but actually came down the road toward their bus, rested on the hood, and then burst into a bright, blinding light and vanished. I don't know if she ever went again. I heard the story many times and she never changed or embellished it. She was in her 80's when she died about 15 years ago, so it was a very long time ago when she had her encounter.

My dad, as I said, is also an adventurer, and until I married, we would all vacation every year in that section of Missouri, visiting the family and exploring every little road and interesting spot on the map. I've explored countless deserted cabins and been through just about every little museum in the area. So, of course, one night we had to see the Spook Light.

I don't remember exactly how old I was, but I know I was in high school, so that would have been the late 70's, early 80's. It was late when we got there, and I only saw a few cars in the area. Dad parked and we waited. Yes, it showed up. I've read the explanations of the light...and some very reputable and determined people claim it's cars on the highway. What I saw was certainly NOT headlights. We watched a car drive down the road toward the light. The light was above the car as it passed under it - and the light was brighter and larger than the tail lights receding in the distance - so I don't see that headlights even farther away could appear that large, even if you could logically assume that the light was above the car, because the highway was higher than the road...I understand all of that.

What happened next convinced me that it was not headlights. The large light split into two smaller lights - and yes, looked like headlights. So, I assumed it was just that and was somewhat disappointed...until the lights moved into a vertical position, held that position for several seconds, then moved back to a horizontal location, joined, and vanished. If a car could have accomplished that feat, that meant it had somehow driven in a traditional way, then on its side, then righted itself and managed to blend its headlights into one bright light and vanish.

I wasn't a child - I was at least 16 years old. I know what I saw and I've never seen anything like it since. I have no explanation for it. I believe I saw the Spook Light. I don't believe it was an alien or ghost; I am convinced there is a logical scientific reason behind it. But whatever it is, it certainly wasn't headlights that night! Perhaps other sightings can be attributed to headlights, but not that summer night 30 years ago!

My dad wants to take my sister and our families back to the old family farm one more time - my daughter, niece and nephew have never been to Missouri. I'm planning to ask for an evening at the Spook Light. Maybe we'll get lucky and pass the mystery on to the next generation!

Submitted by: Cassandra Krummel Golden, November, 2009

Reader's Story from Hornet, Missouri

I saw on your list of most haunted places the name of a place that is very close to my heart. The Spook Lightat Hornet, Missouri. My great uncle, Garland Middleton, owned a museum there for many years. He inherited the nickname "Spooky" from the former ownerThe Spook Light has been studied by scientists from all over, Corps of Engineers, and many more people and for over a hundred years and it has never been explained. I have seen it lots of times myself. I've seen it split into four glowing balls turn red then blue and disappear. It'll be in front of you. then disappear and then be behind you. It's literally went through cars. Sometimes it comes out sometimes and sometimes it doesn't. The best time to see it is after midnight when it's really quiet. They tried to close the road it to the public several years ago. Talk about a 4-state uproar!!!!!! It's still open. :) The story goes back to Indian days.

Submitted by: Diane Melton, October, 2005.

A Reader's Story About the Spooklight in Oklahoma

My name is Jackie and I grow up in Quapaw, Oklahoma, attending grade school and high school through the 10th grade before we moved. My father grew up with the light and I would have to say I saw the Spook Light at least 175 times or more during the time that I lived there in the 1960s.

There used to be an old bar near Spook Light Road where my dad would take us when we had company from out of town. We kids loved to go there, play pool, and listen to the old man who owned the bar tell us stories about the light. Often we would sit outside on the car to watch for the Spook Light. We had to be real quiet or it would not come out. As we watched, all of sudden it would appear at the other end of the road. My dad would leave his lights out and try to creep up on it, but always, by the time we got near the light it would be suddenly be behind us.

It was a regular tradition that our family would attend the Indian pow-wows on the every 4th of July

holiday. On one of these occasions, after we left the pow-wow, we went to my Aunt's house, which was just right off Spook Light Road. As we were drying there about 10:00 p.m., a light came up behind us weaving back and forth across the road like a drunk. My mom insisted that we pull over and let the car pass; however, as soon as we did, the light took off across the land.

I have seen it with a big white light with a small green one below it, as well as it sometimes appearing as a red or yellow-orange colored orb. I believe, at one time Readers Digest came out with a story on it in the late 1950s or early 1960s. On another occasion my father took me and all our friends out into the country where we had such a bizarre experience, it would make you believe almost anything. At this place there was a fence upon land where an Indian and his wife were said to have been killed by a white man. According to the legend, the Indian stated before he died that he and his wife would always be around. At the fence, dad had us hold our hands out with a piece of bread over the fence. Suddenly, we would feel something taking the bread from our hands. Even with a flash light, you could see that one second it was there, and the next, the bread was gone. This was very scary to me at the time.

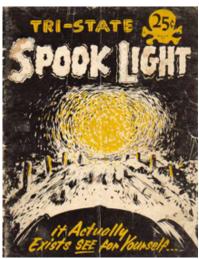
When I grew older, my dates always took me to Spook Light Road and along the way we would cross the Spring River Bridge, its wooden structure rocking side to side so badly, that I was frightened before we ever reached Spook Light Road. I always saw the light appear near Quapaw, Oklahoma.

I don't know if it is the same now like it was back then, so I will be making plans to go home to Quapaw, Oklahoma to see it again. My Aunt Mary, who was raised with me will go with me. It should be fun as we talk about our old stories and try to find the light again.

	Submitted b	v: Jackie	Oliver.	June.	2005
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Tri-State Spook Light

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What went on at the hospital that 'experimented' on child patients?

By Phil Kemp & Ruth Evans File on Four, BBC Radio 4

19 July 2016 | Magazine



Dozens of people who were child patients at a psychiatric hospital in the 1960s and 70s claim they were experimented on with a so-called truth serum. It has left them with disturbing memories and troubling questions.

"I was your typical 60s teenager," says Marianne, a softly-spoken woman in her sixties.

Framed posters of musicians like Bob Dylan and John Lennon still hang on the walls of the living room in her quiet semi in Derby and a feathered dream-catcher twirls in the window.

"I liked fashion, I liked music. It was a good time to be young."

But Marianne's memories of the time aren't all so idyllic.

At the age of 14, she found out from a teacher that she was adopted. Things became difficult at home and after getting into trouble with the police, she was given probation and sent to Aston Hall, a "mental deficiency hospital" treating adults and children.

All that's left today of the complex in Derbyshire is a grand white house where the hospital's staff once lived. The site of the patient dormitories is being redeveloped to make way for new homes.

Find out more



File on 4: What happened at Aston Hall Hospital? is on BBC Radio 4, 19 July at 20:00 BST - catch up on BBC iPlayer Radio

But before the hospital was demolished, a group of urban explorers photographed the derelict site and **posted eerie photos online**. Former patients like Marianne (not her real name) found the forum and started leaving comments about their experiences there.

They set up a support group for former patients, and more started coming forwards with troubling stories about the drugs they were given, the treatments they were subjected to and the long-term effects which still plague them today.





Many claim they were experimented on by the hospital's medical superintendent Dr Kenneth Milner using a drug called sodium amytal. It is known as a "truth serum" for its supposed ability to retrieve locked-away memories.

Marianne recalls a session with the doctor where she was stripped, made to wear a stiff white gown and told she would be asked some questions. Then he injected her with a drug that heavily sedated her.

"I can remember equating it to being drunk and I was going: 'I feel like I've had about a bottle of gin, I feel like I've had about two bottles of gin'. And I can remember going: 'Happy Christmas, doctor'."

Her account is similar to those of other former patients at the time, who remember being locked in a small treatment room with a mattress on the floor. Some say their hands were tied with bandages before they were injected. Their medical records show the typical dose of sodium amytal was 60mg.

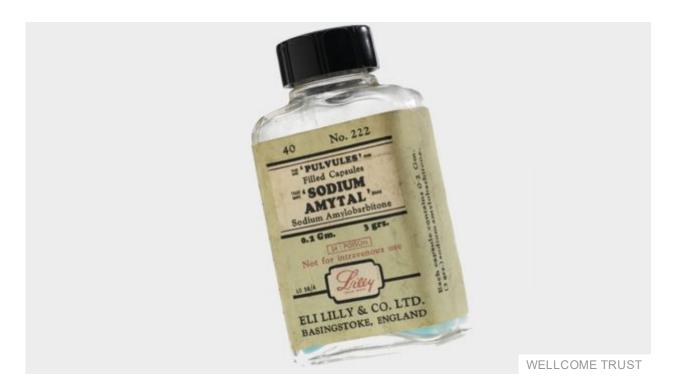
Standards of institutional care for children during the 1960s and 70s have come under close scrutiny in recent years, as accusations of abuse at the time have grown. So what was going on under Dr Milner at Aston Hall?



One expert believes Dr Milner was practising "narcoanalysis", a therapy used during World War Two to treat soldiers with shell-shock.

It was thought men who had experienced the horror of battle sometimes repressed what had happened to them. And this turned the trauma into severe physical paralysis or depression.

Traditional psychotherapy, where patients were asked to talk about their dreams in the hope of uncovering the hidden trauma, took too long. Soldiers were needed back on the frontline. So psychiatrists began using sodium amytal, which made the traumatised servicemen less inhibited.



Dr Norman Poole, a psychiatrist from St George's Hospital in London, sets out the theory: "Once you'd found this traumatic event and the patient was able to express this, then almost like a psychic abscess, you could prick it and the trauma, the grief, the emotions that were connected with it would come out and then the symptoms would resolve."

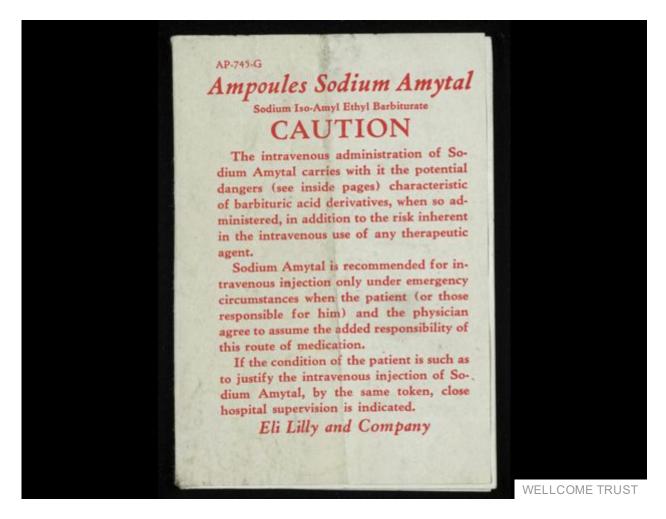
A 1946 documentary by the Hollywood director John Huston follows the rehabilitation of traumatised US servicemen, and shows narcoanalysis at work. In one scene, a soldier is treated with sodium amytal, questioned by a medic and then seen walking around the room unaided, having entered it unable to stand.

Narcoanalysis quickly fell out of fashion after the war, says Dr Poole, as alternative treatments emerged and psychiatrists became concerned about the lack of supporting evidence. However, evidence from Aston Hall shows it was being used into the late 1970s - not on grown male soldiers but vulnerable children and adolescents.

The UK's first-ever professor of child psychiatry, Michael Rutter from King's College London, was practising in the 1960s. The treatment, he says today, was not standard practice.

"As far as I knew nobody was using [sodium amytal] with children at that time," he says.

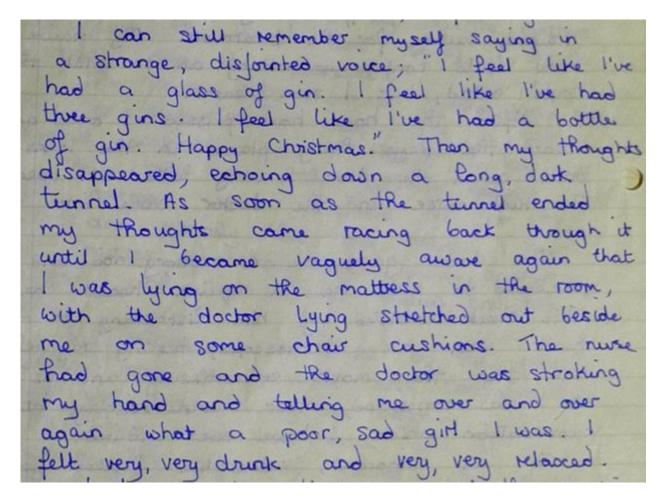
He is concerned by the use of the drug on children and the way it was administered. And he says he "would have been concerned even in those days".



Other experts say Dr Milner should have published research if he was using treatment on young patients that wasn't being widely used elsewhere. We weren't able to find any.

It wasn't just the use of the drug itself that was questionable, but what Dr Milner is alleged to have done when patients were under its influence.

Marianne says she had an internal examination in the room, which was embarrassing and unnecessary, and other patients have alleged sexual abuse by Dr Milner.



Dr Milner died in 1975, making it impossible to put these allegations to him. However, his family point to another former patient who says she was treated with sodium amytal by Dr Milner after seeking his help voluntarily in the 1950s. She describes him as "wonderful" and says the treatment had made her life worth living.

Whatever the truth of these allegations, nearly all the patients we spoke to agreed Dr Milner asked very personal sexual questions during treatment.

"He asked me who'd interfered with me, and I went: 'Nobody'. And he said: 'Somebody's interfered with you'."



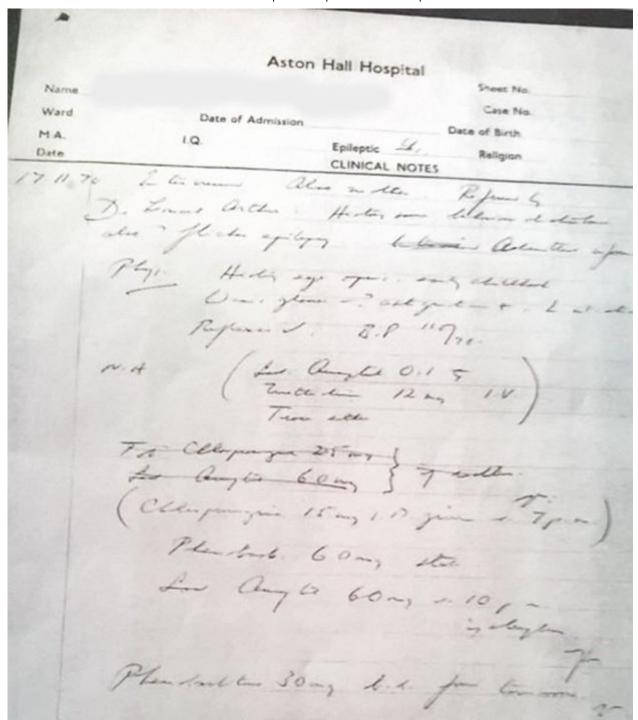
She remembers a young friend at the hospital having a similar experience, and asking Marianne to tell Dr Milner "my dad didn't abuse me".

"For her to have said that about her dad, I think it really hurt her, but I can understand it because he coerced you into thinking these things."

Some experts believe Dr Milner was trying to help his young patients talk about a sexual trauma they had either repressed or were uncomfortable talking about when fully conscious.

But because patients under the influence of sodium amytal are semi-conscious, in a highly suggestible state, there is a danger that asking leading questions can make them believe something happened that, in fact, didn't.

In the 1980s and 90s, the drug was at the centre of a number of law suits of so-called false memory, where patients mistakenly believed they had been the victims of abuse. In one notorious case, an executive from California sued a psychotherapist and was awarded half a million dollars after his daughter accused him of sexually abusing her following therapy. Sodium amytal had been used as part of the treatment.



"It is not a truth serum," says Prof Elizabeth Loftus, an expert in memory from the University of California, Irvine. "When it comes to the recovery of pristine, accurate, allegedly repressed memories, it's a danger."

Another former patient of Aston Hall, Sandra, thinks she may have been encouraged to develop false memories.

After nine or 10 sessions at the hospital, Dr Milner told her: "We've got to the bottom of it, you were a hard nut to crack!"

During treatment, he said, she had revealed her father had sexually abused her as a child. This floored her. "I was just so upset, totally devastated."



Sandra's sister thought words had been put into her mouth. But she disagreed.

"You believe what the doctor says don't you?" she explains.

The accusation caused a rift with her family. Her sisters doubted it could have happened as they looked after her when she was little and say she was never alone with her father.

Eventually, though, Sandra changed her mind.

"It came to me, that perhaps this only did happen under treatment, and for 51 years I have been accusing my father of maybe doing something he did not do. And the worst part about it, if it didn't happen, I've got to live the rest of my life knowing that I've told people that he's done this. And accused him of doing it."



The authorities are now investigating what happened at Aston Hall Hospital. A police inquiry has been launched and the Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board, a multi-agency body including police, health and social services, says it is working to ensure the allegations are thoroughly investigated and the appropriate support is in place for people who need it.

While former patients search for answers about what really happened to them, they may have to live with the harmful effects of the treatment for the rest of their lives.

If there is a story you would like File on 4 to investigate then please email fileon4@bbc.co.uk

File on 4: What happened at Aston Hall Hospital is on BBC Radio 4, 19 July at 20:00 BST - catch up on BBC iPlayer Radio

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August 16, 2015 By Medievalists.net

In the year 1168 a Danish bishop destroyed three pagan gods. The story is told in *Gesta Danorum*, by Saxo Grammaticus, which has recently been entirely translated into English for the first time.



Bishop Absalon topples the god Svantevit at Arkona – created by Laurits Tuxen (1853–1927)

Saxo Grammaticus was a Danish cleric and historian who around the year 1188 began writing the first full history of Denmark. Stretched over 16 books, the *Gesta Danorum* goes back to the time before Jesus Christ to relate the mythological beginnings of the Danes. It has long been popular reading for the tales and legends it gives relating to the pagan past of this region, as well as for covering the rise of important leaders such as Cnut the Great.

As it moves into the twelfth century, the focus of the work concentrates on the rule by various Danish kings, most notably Valdemar I, who was King from 1146 to 1182. While Denmark had long been a Christian country, some of its neighbours in the Baltic Sea region were still pagan, including the Wends, a people who inhabited the island of Rügen, which lies just off the

coast of northeastern Germany.

After years of pirate attacks by the Wends, King Valdemar was persuaded by Absalon, the Bishop of Roskilde and the chief royal advisor, to launch a crusade against the people. In the year 1168 the Danes landed on Rügen and besieged the capital city of Arkona. Once Valdemar's forces set fire to the walls and buildings of the city, the residents of Arkona made a deal to surrender.

Once King Valdemar took control of Arkona and received hostages from the leaders of the Wendish people, he ordered the statue of local deity a god named Svantevit. Saxon writes that the men:

found themselves unable to wrest it from its position without the use of axes; they therefore first tore down the curtains which veiled the shrine, and then commanded their servants to deal swiftly with the business of hacking down the statue; however, they were careful to warn their men to exercise caution in dismantling such a huge bulk, lest they should be crushed by its weight and be thought to have suffered punishment from the malevolent deity. Meanwhile a massive throng of townsfolk ringed the temple, hoping that Svantevit would pursue the instigators of these outrages with his strong, supernatural retribution.

After much work, the men cut down the statue:

With a gigantic crash the idol tumbled to earth. The swarths of purple drapery which hung about the sanctuary certainly glittered, but were so rotten with decay that they could not survive touching. The sanctum also contained the prodigious horns of wild animals, astonishing no less in themselves than in their ornamentation. A devil was seen departing from the inmost shrine in the guise of a black animal, until it disappeared abruptly from the gaze of bystanders.

While the god in Arkona was being destroyed, the Danes received word from the people of Karenz – another important town on the island – they were ready to surrender. Absalon traveled to the town along with 30 men, where they were met by 6000 warriors. However, the Wends prostrated themselves to the Christians and welcome the bishop.

Karenz was the home to three pagan deities - Rugevit, Porevit and Porenut – which were believed to be the gods of war, lightning and thunder. Bishop Absalon came to destroy these gods, and Saxo Grammaticus (who may have been an eyewitness) describes the scene of coming across the the first of the three pagan temples:

The largest shrine was surrounded by its own forecourt, but both spaces were enclosed with purple hangings instead of walls, while the roof gable rested only on pillars. Therefore out attendants tore down the curtains adorning the entrance area and eventually laid hands on the inner veils of the sanctuary. Once these had been removed, an idol made of oak, which they called Rugevit, lay open to the gaze from every quarter, wholly grotesque in its ugliness. For swallows, having built their nests beneath the features of its face, had piled the dirt of their droppings all over its chest. A fine deity, indeed, when its image was fouled so revoltingly by birds! Furthermore, in its head were set seven human faces, all contained under the surface of a single scalp. The sculptor had also provided the same number of real swords in scabbards, which hung on a belt at its side, while an eighth was held brandished in its right hand. The weapon had been inserted into its fists, to which an iron nail had clamped it with so firm a grip that it could not be wrenched away without severing the hand; this was the very pretext needed for lopping it off. In thickness the idol exceeded the width of a human frame, and its height was such that Absalon, standing on the toes of its feet, could hardly reach its chin with the small battleaxe he used to carry.

The men of Karenz had believed this to be the god of war, as though it were endowed with the strength of Mars. Nothing about the effigy was pleasant to look at, for its lineaments were misshapen and repulsive because of the crude carving.

Bishop Absalon soon ordered his men to begin destroying the gods:

Every citizen was possessed by sheer panic when our henchmen began to apply their hatchets to its lower legs. As soon as these had been cut through, the trunk fell, hitting the ground with a loud crash. Once the townsfolk beheld this sight, they scoffed at their god's power and contemptuously forsook the object of their veneration.

Not satisfied with its demolition, Absalon's workforce now stretched their hands all the more eagerly towards the image of Porevit, worshipped in the temple close by. On it were implanted five heads, though it had been fashioned without weapons. After that effigy had been brought down, they assailed the sacred precinct of Porenut. Its statue displayed four faces and a fifth was inserted in its breast, with its left hand touching the forehead, its right the chin. Here again the attendants did good service, chopping at the figure with their axes until it toppled.

After the idols had been broken, the Danish bishop wanted to inflict a more permanent destruction on the pagan gods:

Absalon then issued a proclamation that the citizens must burn these idols the city, but they immediately opposed his command with entreaties, begging him to take pity on their overcrowded city and not expose them to fire after he had spared their throats. If the flames crept to the surrounding area and caught hold of one of the huts, the dense concentration of buildings would undoubtedly cause the whole mass to go up in smoke. For this reason they were bidden to drag the statues out of town, but for a long time the people resisted, continuing to plead religion as their excuse for defying the edict; they feared that the supernatural forces would exact vengeance and cause them to lose the use of those limbs they had employed to carry out the order. In the end Absalon taught them by his admonitions to make light of a god who had not power enough to rise to his own defence, once they had become confident of being immune from punishment, the citizens were quick to obey his directions.

As the remains of the pagan gods were being dragged away, Sven of Arhus, another bishop who came with Absalon, added insult to injury:

So that he might show them the idols deserved disdain, Sven made it his business to stand high on top of them while the men of Karenz were heaving them away. In so doing he added affront by increasing the weight and harassed the pullers as much with humiliation as with the extra burden, when they viewed their deities in residence lying beneath the feet of a foreign bishop.

As this was being done, Bishop Absalon went about preparing the area to be Christian. He first consecrated three burial sites in the countryside just outside Karenz, and after celebrating a mass baptized the people. Saxo then adds, "Likewise by constructing churches in a large number of localities, they exchanged the dens of an esoteric superstition for the edifices of public religion."

The island of Rugen came to accept Christianity – and Danish rule. Bishop Absalon would become the Archbishop of Lund in 1178, serving until his death in 1201. Saxo Grammaticus would finish his *Gesta Danorum* in the early thirteenth-century, covering his account of Denmark's history up to year 1185.

Gesta Danorum: The History of the Danes, has been edited and translated by Karsten Friis-Jensen and Peter Fisher and was published in two volumes earlier this year by Oxford University Press. Click here to visit the publisher's website for more details.

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How Vasquez Rocks, L.A.'s onetime outlaw hideout, became 'Star Trek's' favorite alien landscape

2016-09-08 latimes.com



productions dating back to the 1920s.

Vasquez Rocks, L.A.'s onetime outlaw hideout, became 'Star Trek's' favorite alien landscape

Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park in Southern California has been used as a location on Hollywood productions dating back to the 1920s.

Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park in Southern California has been used as a location on Hollywood

Randy Lewis

The mission, from the day "Star Trek" premiered on America's televisions on Sept. 8, 1966, was ambitious: "to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before."

Where did Gene Roddenberry's TV series go to find that world?

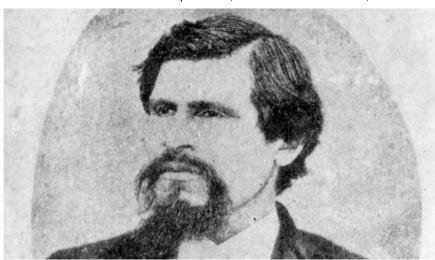
Often as not, it was a piece of alien-looking geology right here in Southern California — amid the jagged, sandstone boulders of Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park, a Santa Clarita Valley desertscape of prehistoric waves, frozen in time, that has done star turns in Hollywood productions since the 1920s.

It's where Capt. James T. Kirk famously battled a seemingly indestructible green lizard called a Gorn in the episode titled "Arena," and it represented planet Capella IV, where Kirk and Dr. McCoy helped an Amazon-like Queen give birth to a warrior prince in "Friday's Child."

"Star Trek" fans can recall Kirk staring in confused wonder as one of the loves of his life, Ruth, inexplicably emerges among the rocks on planet Omicron Delta, ostensibly many light years from Earth, in "Shore Leave." In the same episode, Kirk engages in a rough-and-tumble brawl around the rocks' distinctive angles and crevasses with a trouble-making upperclassman who used to taunt him at Star Fleet Academy.

Vasquez Rocks are named for the outlaw Tiburcio Vasquez, who stole a 500-pound silver ingot in the hills that would bear his name. He was later captured in Hollywood and executed for his crimes.

Probably equally important as its otherworldly topography, Vasquez Rocks, just off the Antelope Valley Freeway en route to Palmdale, sit just at the edge of what's known as the Thirty Mile Zone, a radius around Hollywood in which union actors and technical crew can report for work before pay premiums kick in and jack up the costs of production.



That has made it a favorite location for film and TV directors for decades, going back to Saturday-morning westerns of the 1920s and '30s — such as "The Texas Ranger" in 1931 and "The Girl and the Bandit" in 1939 — through latter-day productions shot there including the 1994 film version of "The Flintstones" and "The Big Bang Theory."

Roddenberry and the "Star Trek"

family quickly zeroed in on Vasquez Rocks — so named for a late-19th century bandit who used the rocks as his hideout, Tiburcio Vasquez (a name tantalizingly close to Capt. James T. Kirk's famous middle name, Tiberius).

The area made its series debut during "Star Trek's" first season in the whimsical "Shore Leave," about a planet where the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise encounter all sorts of fantastic characters and situations that turn out to be the products of an extraterrestrial amusement park. Call it Deep Space Disneyland.

The appeal of Vasquez Rocks as an alien environment is immediately apparent to anyone who visits the park, just off the Antelope Valley Freeway south of the town of Agua Dulce.



Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park, the site of more than 200 films and television shows, is also a popular hiking spot. It's in the Sierra Pelona Mountains of northern Los Angeles County.

Al Seib / Los Angeles Times

Slabs of rock stretch skyward at steep angles out of the dirt and scrub brush to create dramatic formations seen in more than 200 films and

television shows. It's a production set that took shape 25 million years ago with volcanic activity virtually on top of the San Andreas Fault, at the juncture of the North American and Pacific tectonic plates.

The tallest peak among the Vasquez Rocks juts up 150 feet above the canyon floor, but that's just the tip of the tip of this rocky berg, which extends an extra 22,000 feet into the earth below.

A large number of people who visit Vasquez Rocks do ask about 'Star Trek' — people from all over the world. — Kaye Michelson, of L.A. County Department of Parks and Recreation

Over the last 50 years, the site has also been used for episodes of the TV series "Star Trek: The Next Generation," "Star Trek: Voyager" and "Star Trek: Enterprise" as well as the films, including

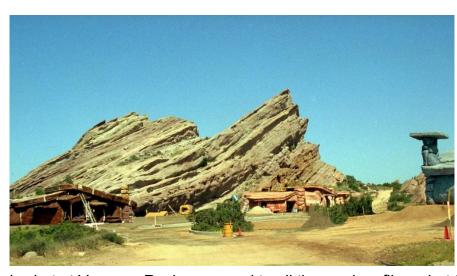
"Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" and J.J. Abrams' 2009 "Star Trek" reboot, where Vasquez Rocks served as part of the landscape for the planet Vulcan, in homage to the site's recurring use in the original show.

A modest gift shop in the Vasquez Rocks Park Interpretive Center points to the "Star Trek" connection with a Starfleet Command/United Federation of Planets refrigerator magnet and a selection of tunic insignias for the different service positions (command, science, medical).

"A large number of people who visit Vasquez Rocks do ask about 'Star Trek' — people from all over the world," said Kaye Michelson, acting public information officer for the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. "The one scene in particular most of them ask about is the scene with Capt. Kirk and the Gorn."

The location's history as a backdrop for so many movie and TV westerns — among them "the Lone Ranger," "Bonanza," "Gunsmoke," "Maverick," "Blazing Saddles," "The Wild, Wild West" and "Kung Fu" — made it a natural fit as a site for "Star Trek," which Roddenberry originally pitched to NBC-TV execs as "Wagon Train' to the stars."

One irony about Vasquez Rocks as a favorite location for westerns is that some 2,500 years ago, it was home to the Tataviam band of Shoshone Indians, who referred to themselves as "People Facing the Sun." (The last full-blooded Tataviam tribe member, Juan Jose Fustero, died in 1921, about the time the center of the film industry shifted from New York to Hollywood.)



For the 1994 live-action movie "The Flintstones," Vasquez Rocks was transformed into the fictional Stone Age town of Bedrock.
Boris Yaro / Los Angeles Times

In more recent times, Vasquez
Rocks have served as the
backdrop in episodes of "Buffy the
Vampire Slayer," "Monk" and even
"Mighty Morphin Power Rangers."
In this year's Joel and Ethan Coen
film "Hail, Caesar!," a western scene

is shot at Vasquez Rocks as a nod to all the cowboy films shot there in the past.

And geek-centric "The Big Bang Theory" chose to film an episode there in homage to the location's previous use in "Star Trek."

Vasquez Rocks attract hikers and rock climbers, but also remain highly evocative to "Trek" fans who recall Kirk's life-and-death battle against the tacky but still menacing green dinosaur-like Gorn.

And it's less than an hour's drive from downtown L.A. by way of the Golden State and Antelope Valley freeways, barely .000000000000 of a parsec away.

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Find out if your house was built on a GRAVEYARD, jail or hospital

September 11th 2016 hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: September 10, 2016

By Mike Covell







STRANGE SITES: From Victorian graveyards to RAF bases and sweet factories.

From prisons to zoos, and sweet factories to football grounds, many of Hull's once-famous landmarks are now home to residential estates.

As a local historian, people often ask me: "What is my house built on?" We'd all love (or perhaps should that be hate) to think that we may be living on a burial ground, or the site of a battle.

Fortunately, Hull's history has been well-documented and there are numerous old maps, plans, trade directories and other sources that people can consult. So, here are my top ten

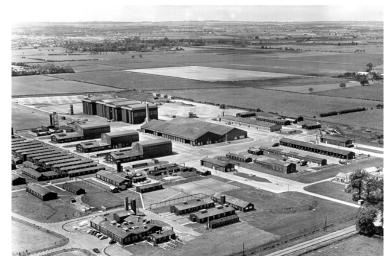
locations in Hull that are now occupied by housing.

1) RAF Sutton on Hull

Until the late 1930s, Bransholme was little more than farmers' fields. Then in 1938, with the threat of war on the horizon, the authorities decided to establish a barrage balloon squadron in Hull as part of defences against German bombers.

RAF 17 Balloon Centre was born and opened in January 1939. The base covered most of the land between Wawne Road, Leads Road and Sutton Road, including the North Point Shopping Centre.

As history records, Hull was the most badly bombed British city outside London during the Blitz.



BRANSHOLME BASE: RAF Sutton-on-Hull.

2) Evan Fraser Hospital, Sutton Park

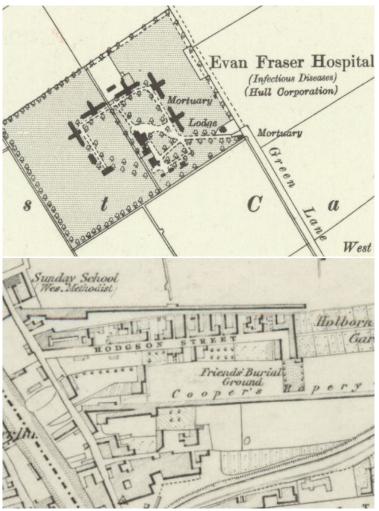
Evan Fraser was a well-known Hull surgeon, working at No. 30 Whitefriargate for many years. He was also a generous man who donated huge sums to local hospitals and charities for the poor before his death in 1906, at his home at No. 52 Spring Bank. He was cremated and is now resting in Hedon Road Columbarium.

Taking its name from the great man, Evan Fraser Hospital was a smallpox hospital built near Sutton in 1899 and consisted of main building, mortuary and burial ground. It was opened just in time for a

smallpox outbreak in the same year, when 475 cases and 61 deaths were reported.

The hospital was riddled with tragedies, with numerous deaths reported in the old Hull newspapers. Today, the site is bordered by Littondale and Nidderdale with Marsdale occupying most of the old hospital grounds.

INFECTIOUS: The Evan Fraser Hospital, on land now occupied by Sutton Park homes.



month later, two more deaths were reported.

3) Friends' Burial Ground

The Friends' Burial Ground, for Quakers, appears on just one map of Hull from the 1850s and became obsolete in 1862 after the opening of the new Hull General Cemetery (the graveyard between Princes Avenue and Spring Bank West). It was quickly developed and built on, with new streets laid out a short while later.

Today, the site is occupied by Spyvee Street, off New Cleveland Street, in east Hull.

The Friends' Burial Ground, on a map from the 1850s.

4) Garrison Hospital

Garrison Hospital was a smallpox hospital that stood on South Bridge Way, near the Citadel, Victoria Dock. It was built in 1866 and by 1881 it had been enlarged to include 46 beds. It was later replaced by the aforementioned Evan Fraser Hospital.

The site was primarily used to treat smallpox and when more infectious diseases were reported, the patients would be moved on to the Humber, isolated on a moored ship. In 1885, it was reported that 15 patients had been admitted to the hospital with smallpox, with two of them dying. It was hoped a vaccination programme would help the others. A

Today the site of the hospital, on Victoria Dock, is occupied by South Bridge Road, Ocean Boulevard, and Pilots Way.



FEVERS: The hospital on Victoria Dock.

5) Needlers sweet factory

Famous company Needlers was founded in Anne Street in 1886, when Fred Needler bought Mr. Buckton's confectionary business for £100 and began producing boiled sweets.

After moving to several ever-larger sites around Hull, in 1905 a new factory was built off Sculcoates Lane and carried on production for almost 100 years.

The factory was sadly demolished in 2003 and two years later, the new "Urban Sensation" housing

estate was built and the street named Needlers Way in honour of its illustrious past.

FAMOUS: The Needlers factory in 1993.

6) Hull Football Ground

Some years ago a resident of Holderness Road asked me if there was any truth in the story that a great battle had once taken place here. In fact, many battles of a sort did indeed happen on the site, but between sporting







The Hull Football Ground, was used for football, lacrosse and as a fairground and showground. Hull FC also played numerous games there.

By the late 1890s, the football ground had been closed and two new streets were laid out, Severn Street and Mersey Street. No sign of the ground exists today.

LONG GONE: Mike Covell in Severn Street, once the site of a football ground.

7) Hull's first railway station

The Hull and Selby Railway operated a line into Hull in 1840, with a passenger and goods terminal at Manor House Street Station, overlooking the Humber Dock, or Hull Marina as it is known today. Six years later, rival companies began looking at a new line and station for Hull and so Paragon Station was born.

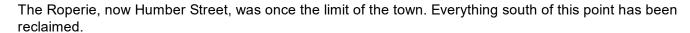
Manor House Street Station became a goods terminal until its closure in 1961. Today, the site is bordered by Kingston Street, Manor House Street and Wellington Street West, with Halyard Croft standing on the site of the old Goods Shed.

The old railway station, next to Humber Dock, was closed in the 1960s.

8) Reclaimed land from the Humber

From 1778, when the Dock, later Queen's Dock was dug, and throughout the Victorian period, a great deal of soil and earth was pulled from the site of the docks and deposited next to an area known as the Ropery. Today, we know this as **Humber Street**, but in the 1700s it was the front of the town of Hull on the Humber Estuary.

The streets of Wellington Street, Nelson Street, Pier Street, Minerva Terrace and the southern end of Queen Street were built on this reclaimed land.





Today, we think of the prison in Hedon Road but this grim Victorian building only dates back to the late 19th century. In 1785, a "gaol" was built on the southern side of what is today Castle Street, close to the Humber Estuary. Then in 1829, it was replaced by the "New Gaol", on Kingston Street with five wings surrounding a circular observation post.

For many years it was run by Lieutenant Neill, who, as governor, had to present the Hull Corporation with annual reports into the running of the gaol, its staff, expenditure, and the criminals who were housed there. It was closed and demolished in 1870 and today the site takes in Manor House Street, Marine Court and Admiral's







Croft.

The gaol in Kingston Street, built in 1829.

10) Zoological Gardens

Once standing in Spring Bank, the Zoological Gardens were a popular attraction for the residents of Hull, who could take in a band, walk around the neatly planted gardens or see the animals.

The Zoological Gardens comprised seven acres of land, including several animal enclosures and ponds, and opened in 1840. It was designed by HF Lockwood and included a "menagerie" of lions, tigers, elephants, monkeys, owls, eagles, and polar bears.

Sadly the site became financially unviable, despite numerous fundraising parties and subscription funds, and the land was sold to the Albion Building Society. Today the site is occupied by Hutt Street and Peel Street.

A plan of the Zoological Gardens, superimposed on a modern map of Spring Bank, with Morpeth Street in the centre.

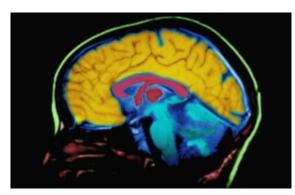
 Have you heard a story about your house or street. Was it built in a historic location? Email Mike at amazinghulltours@hotmail.com and we'll look to print some of the best stories.

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Nearly 100 previously unidentified brain areas revealed by examination of the cerebral cortex

• By Linda Geddes, Nature magazine on July 20, 2016



Credit: © Royalty-Free/CORBIS (MARS)

Think of a spinning globe and the patchwork of countries it depicts: such maps help us to understand where we are, and that nations differ from one another. Now, neuroscientists have charted an equivalent map of the brain's outermost layer—the cerebral cortex—subdividing each hemisphere's mountain- and valley-like folds into 180 separate parcels.

Ninety-seven of these areas have never previously been described, despite showing clear differences in structure, function and connectivity from their neighbours. The new brain map is published today in *Nature*.

Each discrete area on the map contains cells with similar structure, function and connectivity. But these areas differ from each other, just as different countries have well-defined borders and unique cultures, says David Van Essen, a neuroscientist at Washington University Medical School in St Louis, Missouri, who supervised the study.

Neuroscientists have long sought to divide the brain into smaller pieces to better appreciate how it works as a whole. One of the best-known brain maps chops the cerebral cortex into 52 areas based on the arrangement of cells in the tissue. More recently, maps have been constructed using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) techniques—such as functional MRI, which measures the flow of blood in response to different mental tasks.

Yet until now, most such maps have been based on a single type of measurement. That can provide an incomplete or even misleading view of the brain's inner workings, says Thomas Yeo, a computational neuroscientist at the National University of Singapore. The new map is based on multiple MRI measurements, which Yeo says "greatly increases confidence that they are producing the best *in vivo* estimates of cortical areas".

Divide and conquer

To construct the map, a team led by neuroscientist Mathew Glasser at Washington University Medical School used imaging data collected from 210 healthy young adults participating in the Human Connectome Project, a US government-funded initiative to map the brain's structural and functional connections. The information included measurements of cortical thickness; brain function; connectivity between regions; topographic organization of cells in brain tissue; and levels of myelin—a fatty substance that speeds up neural signalling.

Glasser looked for areas in the cerebral cortex where he saw significant changes in two or more properties, and used these to delineate borders on the map. "If you crawl along the cortical surface, at some point you are going to get to a location where the properties start changing, and where multiple independent properties change in the same place," he says.

The technique confirmed the existence of 83 previously reported brain areas and identified 97 new ones. Scientists tested their map by looking for these regions in the brains of 210 additional people. They found that the map was accurate, but that the size of the areas in it varied from person to person. These differences may reveal new insights into individual variability in cognitive ability and disease risk.

Limited view

"While the focus of this work was on creating a beautiful, reliable, average brain template, it really opens up the possibility to further explore the unique intersection of individual talents with intellectual and creative abilities—the things that make us uniquely human," says Rex Jung, a neuropsychologist at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.

But the map is limited in some important ways. For one, it reveals little about the biochemical underpinnings of the brain—or about the activity of single neurons or small groups. "It is analogous to having a fantastic Google Earth map of your neighbourhood, down to your individual back yard," says Jung. "Yet, you cannot really see how your neighbours are moving around, where they are going or what sort of jobs they have."

"We're thinking of this as version 1.0," says Glasser. "That doesn't mean it's the final version, but it's a far better map than the ones we've had before."

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lan McKellen turned down £1 million offer to officiate wedding dressed as Gandalf

telegraph.co.uk

lan McKellen turned down an astonishing \$1.5 million offer to officiate a billionaire's wedding dressed as Gandalf, whom the actor famously played in Lord of the Rings.

McKellen was allegedly offered the money by Sean Parker, co-founder of the record-streaming service Napster and the first president of Facebook.

Parker, who Forbes magazine estimate is worth \$1.8 billion, married the singer Alexandra Lenas in a Tolkien-themed wedding in 2013, which, according to Vanity Fair magazine, featured a nine-foot-tall wedding cake and "fur-pelt-strewn beds in the lounge area".

The wedding, which took place in California, reportedly cost \$7.5 million and was attended by Sting and Emma Watson. Sadly for the couple, McKellen was not present.

"I was offered \$1.5 million to marry a very famous couple in California, which I would perhaps have considered doing but I had to go dressed as Gandalf," the 77-year-old, who conducted the 2013 civil wedding of Star Trek actor Sir Patrick Stewart and Sunny Ozell, told the Mail on Sunday. "So I said, 'I am sorry, Gandalf doesn't do weddings'."

Speaking last night outside the Theatre Royal in Newcastle, where he is performing in Harold Pinter's No Man's Land, McKellen said: "He was a very rich man, that's all I know... I don't go dressing up – except in plays and things at places like this."

Credit: Johan Persson

Ice Cream Truck Robbed By Man With Assault Rifle In Avondale

dnainfo.com



dna info By Paul Biasco | August 18, 2016 5:58am @Paul Biasco



A man armed with a rifle robbed an ice cream truck in Avondale Saturday in the 3000 block of North Sawyer Avenue, according to police.

A man armed with a rifle robbed an ice cream truck in Avondale Saturday in the 3000 block of North Sawyer Avenue, according to police. DNAinfo/Paul Biasco

AVONDALE — A man with an assault rifle robbed an ice cream truck in Chicago's Avondale neighborhood last weekend and pointed the gun at a person waiting in line for ice cream, witnesses said.

The ice cream truck was parked

in the 3000 block of North Sawyer Avenue at 4:35 p.m. Saturday to sell ice cream in 83-degree heat

That's when a man pulled up in a car and stuck up the ice cream man.

"He pulled over, got out, just walked up, and he was talking to him for a while kind of calmly before he pointed the gun at him," said a witness, who asked to remain anonymous. "The driver was kind of confused. He was like 'what are you asking me?"

The robber then turned the gun on a man waiting at the truck's window to buy ice cream.

"What are you looking at?" the thief asked him, according to the witness.

During the robbery, the gunman ordered the ice cream man to throw his keys out of the truck, the witness said. The driver followed the instructions, and the gunman grabbed the money and drove off in the car he arrived in.

"How much money can an ice cream truck have?" said Nourhy Beatriz, a Logan Square resident who has ordered from the victim before. "It's ridiculous. It's sad. It's in a neighborhood full of kids, and it's supposed to be a nice neighborhood."

In the days since the robbery, the ice cream man has returned to his usual spot, according to neighbors on the block. He told the witness "you just have to keep going."

The driver has been driving an ice cream truck for about 20 years, according to the witness.

Beatriz described the truck as an older truck that sells classic Good Humor-type ice cream and paletas.

"I feel really sorry for the guy," she said.

Police sent out a community alert after the robbery and two others, which they said they believe are all connected. The alert initially did not mention the ice cream truck.

Police later confirmed the victim in Avondale was an ice cream truck driver.

The police alert indicated a robber had been using an assault weapon to carjack drivers in Bucktown and Avondale, first pulling a gun and demanding the keys of a driver in the 2700 block of North Western Avenue at 11:42 a.m. Saturday.

Police said the same robber struck again at the Sawyer address, less than a block from Avondale Elementary School.

Police initially said that incident was a carjacking, but witnesses said it was an armed robbery.

The third incident in the alert occurred in the 2600 block of North Elston Avenue at 8:15 p.m. Saturday.

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Why do we say 'I'm as happy as Larry'?

abc.net.au

First published:

Tuesday 19 July 2016 8:51AM

By:

Tiger Webb



Could pioneering colonial pugilist Larry Foley be the source of the phrase?

Image: Could pioneering colonial pugilist Larry Foley be the source of the phrase? (National Library of Australia)

When we say 'as happy as Larry', to whom are we referring? Is there any truth in the claim that it's of boxing origin? ABC Language researcher **Tiger Webb** takes a look.

Idioms are, if not the bread and butter of language, then certainly the cracked peppercorn or a similarly exciting condiment. We use them all the time.

But unless English is your second language, it takes a special type of mind to unpack the weirdness behind many of the common sayings of Australian English. Precisely because idioms are so common, most minds process their nonsensicality (the bee's knees, the cat's pyjamas) almost automatically.

Dressing for my first day of school, my sisters kindly informed me that being as flash as a rat with a gold tooth did not, in fact, mean that I resembled a rodent.

Rank parochialism it may be, but I've always felt Australian idioms to be particularly inscrutable. Blessed with a father whose affinity for rhyming slang and ockerisms knows no mortal bounds, as a youth I was routinely confused by words that made no sense to me yet seemed widely understood by everyone else in this wide brown land.

As our family boiled in a beach car park waiting for a spot to be vacated, I was surprised to learn that the places was not full, but *chockers*. Dressing for my first day of school, my sisters kindly informed me that being *as flash as a rat with a gold tooth* did not, in fact, mean that I resembled a rodent.

My childhood was also haunted by an unusually well-meaning spectre: that of Larry, as in *as happy as*. Everyone in Australia seemed to have met this Larry character, and had all independently found him to be an extraordinarily upbeat fellow. As I met Lawrences and Laurents in primary school—all of whom seemed quite dour—I began to idly wonder whether I'd ever meet this *ur*-Larry, ever come to behold his beaming visage.

You can imagine my surprise when I learnt that there *was* no Larry. 'Why on earth,' I began, presumably petulantly, 'do you all say it, then?'

An etymological mystery

There are few three-word phrases that keep lexicographers up at night as much as *of unknown origin*, but that's exactly where the Australian National Dictionary Centre falls on *as happy as Larry*. It hazards a guess at 'an arbitrary partial rhyming reduplication' with *happy*, which seems rather strange to mine ear.

The phrase first pops up in New Zealand in 1875, where Harry Orsman, editor of the *New Zealand Dictionary of English* spotted it in the writings of one George Llewellyn Meredith. Meredith, a prominent Launcestonian who spent time in Auckland engaging principally in agricultural pursuits, is reported to have written the words 'we would be *as happy as Larry* if it were not for the rats.'

Orsman, the dictionary editor, supposed that Larry was a stand-in for one of two other words: *larrie*, a word of Clydesdale origin meaning a joke, or *larrikin*, a well-known Australian term for a cad. We can probably safely rule out the latter: as Melissa Bellanta notes in her history of larrikinism, the term was pejorative through much of the 19th century. Larrikins, then, were not particularly happy—on account of being frequently incarcerated.

A fighting chance at the phrase's origin

There is another theory about why we say as happy as Larry, and it suggests an eponymous source: Larry Foley, a man described by the Australian Dictionary of Biography as a 'pugilist and contractor', and in one obituary as 'a popular citizen and old-time champion boxer'.

Foley was a truly remarkable fighter—undefeated in his time, once lasting over 70 rounds in a fight before police intervened—but whether he was particularly happy is another question. Most interpretations base this on the substantial payout for his final fight: over one thousand pounds. There are even apocryphal reports of a newspaper headline—HAPPY AS LARRY—being the source of the phrase.

The Macquarie Dictionary has the first Australian citation of *happy as Larry* from a Tom Collins novel in 1905, some 30 years after Foley's retirement from boxing: 'Now that the adventure was drawing to an end, I found a peace of mind that all the old fogies on the river couldn't disturb. I was *as happy as Larry*.'

Sad news for historical Larry-seekers

Trove, that fantastic digital repository of information whose funding is under threat, has two usages that predate the career of Larry Foley and would rule him out as any kind of etymology for the *happy* as *Larry* saying.

Bruce Moore, editor of the Australian National Dictionary, has contended that it is exactly the anonymity of expressions such as *happy as Larry* that lend them their particular potency.

Regardless of its actual origin, the phrase fits a well-established idiomatic pattern in English: as X as Y.

In this sense, as happy as Larry is very similar to as smooth as butter, or as good as gold, or (my personal favourite provincial slur on the British capital) as sure as the Devil's in London.

One reason that *happy as Larry* may have stuck around since its pre-Federation origin is that it was use extensively in World War I and RSL missives. As Moore has noted, the First World War had a 'profound effect' on the lexical inventory of Australian English.

Beyond neologisms (*digger, Aussie, plonk* all record their first use during the war) it's no large stretch to see how existing Australian or New Zealand terms might have been used as a way of solidifying Australian (or ANZAC) linguistic identity on the front, and cherished thereafter by those that returned.

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The Incredible Chevalier d'Eon, Who Left France as a Male Spy and Returned as a Christian Woman atlasobscura.com



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Celebrity, scandal, tell-all books, palace intrigue, political protest and more.

by Linda Rodriguez McRobbie July 29, 2016



When the Chevalier d'Eon left France in 1762, it was as a diplomat, a spy in the French king's service, a Dragoon captain, and a man. When he returned in July 1777, at the age of 49, it was as a celebrity, a writer, an intellectual, and a woman—according to a declaration by the government of France.

What happened? And why?

The answer to those questions is complex, obscured by layers of bad biography, speculation and rumor, and shifting gender and psychological

politics in the years since, as well as d'Eon's own attempts to reframe his story in a way that would make sense to his contemporary society. (Note: In consultation with d'Eon's biographer, I have decided to use the male pronoun when talking about d'Eon before the gender shift and the female pronoun after.) Professor Gary Kates of Pomona College is one of the first modern academics to look closely at the life—or lives—of the Chevalier d'Eon, in his comprehensive biography *Monsieur d'Eon Is a Woman*. Kates had access to d'Eon's personal papers, a treasure trove of manuscripts, diaries, financial records, documents, and letters housed at the University of Leeds, and his work is widely considered the best place to start when considering d'Eon.

The story Kates tells is a complex narrative, involving Ancien Regime intrigue, secret spy rings, political necessity, burgeoning celebrity culture, and nascent feminism. The meaning of d'Eon's transformation has been dissected for centuries; feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft praised d'Eon in their lifetime and contemporary trans groups have named themselves in d'Eon's honor.

Even so, Kates cautions that the history of this fascinating figure is far from complete. "I don't think I've written the definitive book on d'Eon," he says. How could he? This is a person who lived enough for three lifetimes.

The King's Secret

Charles-Geneviève-Louis-Auguste-André-Timothée d'Éon de Beaumont was born October 5, 1728, to a minor aristocratic family in Burgundy; despite later claims, there was no hint of anything unusual about his birth and he was declared a boy. After a largely uneventful adolescence and completing his studies in Paris, d'Eon's family's connections secured him a place in civil service. He steadily climbed the ranks until, in 1756, d'Eon became secretary to the French ambassador to Russia.

This traditional role, however, was just a cover: D'Eon was also tapped for another royal service—*le Secret du Roi*, or "King's Secret". The *Secret* was a network of spies and diplomatic agents established by Louis XV in the 1740s with the aim of putting his cousin, the Prince de Conti, on the Polish throne and turning the country into a French satellite. The *Secret* was so secret, it was hidden from and sometimes acted against the official French foreign ministry. D'Eon was charged with fostering good relations with the Russian court of the Empress Elizabeth and getting her behind installing Conti in Poland, as well as promoting France's interests generally. Though d'Eon was competent, by all accounts hardworking, charming, and clever, the geopolitical reality was grim: That same year, France had entered what would become the Seven Years War with Britain.

The war did not go well for France and by March 1762, Louis XV called for peace talks to begin. In August 1762, d'Eon, who had left Russia for a stint as a Dragoon in the French Army, was appointed secretary to the French ambassador who was then negotiating the peace with Britain; he was also admitted to the prestigious royal and military Order of Saint Louis, a huge honor for a man only 35 at the time, and allowed to call himself "Chevalier", the equivalent of "Sir". When the peace treaty was signed in February 1763, France found itself stripped of its colonies in North America, saddled with enormous debts, and desperate for revenge. So the *Secret* regrouped with a new purpose: Invade Britain. In April 1763, d'Eon was named minister plenipotentiary, with the status of ambassador, to the British court—an excellent cover for directing a survey of the English coast to find a good place to mount an invasion and cultivating members of Britain's opposition party in Parliament.



Things seemed to be ticking along for d'Eon's career, but within months, it would all crumble. For starters, he had expensive tastes, much to the frustration of his cash-strapped government, and was reprimanded for importing too much wine. And he wasn't really the ambassador. The real ambassador, the Comte de Guerchy, was a man with little diplomatic experience and not well-liked or particularly competent; he was expected to arrive within the year, and d'Eon would be demoted to secretary. The awkwardness was compounded by the fact that though d'Eon was under Guerchy in his above-board ministerial position, he was above and sometimes at odds with Guerchy in his work in the *Secret*. The situation, d'Eon claimed, was untenable and he let his superiors know that in a series of increasingly angry letters.

On October 4, 1763, just six months after he'd been given the job, d'Eon was fired for his insolent behavior. He had until the 19th to come home for chastising.

D'Eon wasn't going. He had real reason to fear that he was headed for the Bastille – other inconvenient noblemen had disappeared for less – however, d'Eon also knew that his position in the *Secret* afforded him a measure of protection. Louis XV ordered d'Eon be extradited back to France, but the British foreign minister refused, declaring that d'Eon was free to stay in Britain as a private citizen. D'Eon wasn't out of danger yet—the French Foreign Ministry made several attempts to kidnap and arrest him. In retaliation, d'Eon intimated to his superiors in the *Secret* that he would tell everything if he wasn't vindicated. And in March 1764, he fired a warning shot: He published a scandalous book, the first of several promised volumes, of all his diplomatic correspondence since being named minister plenipotentiary.

The effect was staggering. D'Eon went from a somewhat minor figure on the European political stage to the central character for a short time, talked about not only by heads of state but by newspapers, in cafes, even in aristocratic households as well: Kates includes a contemporary letter from a 16-year-old girl to her friend in which she dishes about d'Eon's "treasonous impudence".



It was shocking, it was libelous, but it worked. In some sense, d'Eon had thrown himself not on the mercy of the British government, but the British people, which gave him a kind of celebrity protection. And the fact that he had made himself an open enemy of the French Foreign Ministry made him even more useful as a spy, allowing him to entrench more deeply in British society. Louis XV quietly gave D'Eon a lifelong pension of 12,000 livres annually, in exchange for reports about British politics and handing over the incriminating documents about the *Secret* he possessed. D'Eon's next volumes in his tell-all never appeared, however, and he was forbidden from returning to France. He spent the next decade in exile in London, still in service to his King.

But when Louis XV died in 1774, his son, the ill-fated Louis XVI, wanted the *Secret* eliminated. He saw no utility in having effectively two foreign policies,

one secret, and, moreover, he no longer wanted to invade Britain. So d'Eon was again a problem.

Enter Pierre Beaumarchais, playwright and representative of the French government. In 1775, Beaumarchais approached d'Eon to negotiate his return to France and, crucially, the return of any documents he possessed pursuant to his spy work. After several months of discussion, d'Eon signed *The Transaction*, as the agreement was called: He would give up all papers and return to France as soon as possible. The king would pay some of his substantial debts and his pension, and he would publicly recognize d'Eon as a woman.

'All the World Says It'

The only thing that made the plan at all plausible was the fact that a lot of people, including the French government, already thought d'Eon was secretly a woman. As early as 1770, rumors began circulating in Britain and France that the Chevalier was actually a Chevalière, and once they started, they didn't stop. One French aristocrat wrote to a friend, "All the world says it. Final incontestable proof!" The groundswell of gossip was enough that in 1771, London bookmakers started taking bets on his gender—3:2 odds that he was a woman, at first, before sinking to even money. The bizarre public debate made d'Eon's life difficult; he couldn't leave the house without armed guards, owing to the many people who wanted to see him naked, yet his understandable refusal to publicly reveal his gender prolonged the debate for years.

But there may have been more to his refusal than simple pride. In May 1772, a French secretary in the service of the *Secret* allegedly came to London to investigate the claim that d'Eon was a woman; he left in June, fully convinced that d'Eon was indeed female because *that's what d'Eon told him*. From that point on, Kates wrote, the French government took it as fact that d'Eon was a woman. Kates believed that d'Eon planted the rumors himself, so that when Beaumarchais came calling in 1775, d'Eon was armed with a fictional narrative that he'd been born female but forced into the role of a son by a tyrannical father. This would have enabled him to retire from the *Secret* and return to France, as Kates suggested, a "heroine who had dressed up as a man in order to perform patriotic acts for Louis XV" in the eyes of the public, rather than as a "trickster".



Strangely, the scheme worked, although it would be another 18 months of squabbling with Beaumarchais and others before d'Eon would finally leave England, but in July 1777 he did. By then, most of Europe knew d'Eon's story, or at least the version d'Eon wanted everyone to know: Born female, d'Eon was raised male by a father who wanted a son; he excelled as a diplomat and soldier; and was now coerced by the new king and propriety to adopt the appearance of his birth gender. As a condition of the Transaction, d'Eon was meant to return

to France in women's dress, but d'Eon was still wearing his Dragoon captain's uniform, as much a symbol of his political power as gender, when he stepped off the boat. It took several months and a royal decree, but he was eventually coaxed out of it. He was handed over to Rose Bertin, famous clothing director to Marie Antionette, in whom he supposedly confided, "Truthfully, Mademoiselle, I do not yet know what I need.... I only know that it is more difficult to equip a lady than a company of Dragoons from head to foot."

On November 21, 1777, Mademoiselle la Chevaliere d'Eon was formally presented at the court at Versailles, "reborn" after a four-hour toilette that included powdered hair, an elaborate dress and make-up. Contemporary reports nastily remarked that d'Eon was not an attractive woman: "She had nothing of our sex but the petticoats and the curls which suited her horribly," declared one female courtier.

After a period of adjustment, d'Eon appeared to embrace womanhood and her persona as an "Amazon" woman, although contemporary reports suggest that she never really comported herself quite in the style of



other aristocratic women. It didn't matter: Most of society accepted her story as fact and hailed her as a heroine in the mold of Joan of Arc. But the reality of life as a woman was also disappointing, and her political, patriotic voice was essentially muted. When France joined the American War of Independence in 1778, d'Eon petitioned the government to allow her to wear her Dragoon captain's uniform once again, which she believed would enable her to go to war for France. Far from being moved, the government pressured her to enter a convent; others at Versailles, where she was now living, told her that the only way she could have any political influence was through marriage. When d'Eon continued to demand the government allow her to go to war, she was arrested and thrown into a dungeon beneath the Chateau of Dijon. She was released after 19 days and the promise that

she would stop asking. Every political effort d'Eon made from then on would be immediately quashed by the French government, who eventually forced her into retirement on her family estate in rural Tonnerre.

Last Days in England

In 1785, she moved back to England, ostensibly to settle some debts but in reality, seeking the freedom from monarchic despotism that Britain seemed to enjoy; she was welcomed in society as a heroine. But when the French Revolution began in 1789, d'Eon's annual pension was suspended, and she found herself broke. A sale of her famous collection of books couldn't cover her debts and by 1791, d'Eon, now in her 60s, resorted to putting on fencing exhibitions for money, styling herself as a kind of swordswoman-warrior. Though lacking money, she still enjoyed a modicum of celebrity: In 1792, her portrait was painted by Thomas Stewart, with d'Eon wore a full cockade hat, in support of the French Revolution, and a dusting of stubble on her cheeks.



The portrait, now housed at the National Portrait Gallery in London, was painted not long after d'Eon offered to lead an army of women for the fledgling French National Assembly. Her sword-fighting career lasted until 1796, when she was badly injured during a tournament and was forced to retire. Not long after, she was driven by poverty to share a flat with another elderly woman, a widow by the name of Mrs. Cole. She became a virtual shut-in, often too ill to leave her bed, and saw very few people.

She died May 21, 1810, at the age of 81. And then, Mrs. Cole made a startling discovery when she went to dress her friend's body for burial: The woman who'd become a man to serve her king was biologically male. D'Eon's obituary a few days later described her as a "political character" most remembered for her "questionable gender", which, the papers said, could now be reported as

definitely male. Hardly what d'Eon would have wanted.

The facts of d'Eon's life are confusing, as are her real motivations for becoming a woman in the public and private eye. She left behind some 2,000 pages of unpublished manuscripts, including drafts of her autobiography, some of which was outright fiction and shed only partial light on why she did what she did. Viewing her decision with a 21st century lens, however, is almost certainly inappropriate: She is not exactly the 18th century Caitlyn Jenner, nor is she, "Britain's first openly transvestite male", as National Portrait Gallery curator Lucy Peltz told *The Guardian* in 2013.

"I see d'Eon's gender transformation as a mid-life crisis which has very much to do with a reaction to the hyper-masculinity of diplomacy and politics of the Old Regime," explained Kates, who said that d'Eon had come to see



political life itself, backbiting and detestable, as the cause of her misfortunes. During the period after she was disowned by the French Foreign Ministry, d'Eon began collecting books on famous, virtuous women throughout history and early feminist thought, eventually amassing one of the largest collections of feminist writing in Europe; women, d'Eon came to believe, were more decent than men. "I think it's at that point in his life that living as a woman comes to him as a way to transform himself morally and away to escape this hypermasculine box he found himself in," says Kates.



Kates also sees d'Eon's transition as a moral choice propelled by her refound, fervent Christian faith; D'Eon himself referred to his transition as a "conversion from bad boy to good girl". "[D'Eon]

believes in two things: One is that whether we live as a man or a woman is a choice that all of us have and that women in the 18th century are living lives that are morally superior to men, and therefore we should choose, we men should choose to live as women," explains Kates. In the context of her faith, said Kates, "It is the Christianity that empowers him to cross the gender barrier."

That d'Eon had a choice at all Kates sees as emblematic of the progression of "bourgeois individualism", as people with the means were increasingly able to decide against set roles and modes of behavior to do what fulfilled them. "This is obvious in the sense of occupations... Our occupations just followed us and we didn't have any choice, but somewhere in the early modern world, we realized that we ought to have choice," said Kates. "In that way, we're just extending this to gender."

Womanhood as Survival

Not all scholars accept that view of a revolutionary d'Eon. Dr. Simon Burrows, historian of the Enlightenment at Western Sydney University, is the editor of a collection of essays on d'Eon and has explored the story in the context of burgeoning celebrity culture. Though Kates asserts that d'Eon was in charge of his own destiny, Burrows doesn't believe that d'Eon planted the rumors that she was actually a woman to furnish her later escape plan; he says there is evidence to suggest that d'Eon disguised herself as a woman in the 1760s to evade the French Foreign Ministry, and that it's possible the rumors stemmed from those incidents. Burrows does, however, think it's very possible that d'Eon didn't dispel the rumors because he was accepting payment from betting houses to keep his gender a mystery.

Burrows says that d'Eon was in a tight spot when Beaumarchais approached her—she'd long been living beyond her means and the French government rarely paid on time. "D'Eon really has little option but to agree, but it also has advantages for him.... He needs money, doesn't he? And in Britain there's risk he'll be locked up as a debtor, so he does it for his own safety," said Burrows. "I think Beaumarchais out-maneuvers him at a time when he really wants to go back to France."



The d'Eon that Burrows describes is more reactive, less considered and more survivalist. It could easily have been Beaumarchais's idea to allow d'Eon to come back to France only as a woman—D'Eon's court-ordered gender re-assignment effectively politically neutered a dangerously out-spoken celebrity, for one thing, and for another, Beaumarchais had bet a lot of money on d'Eon's gender being exposed as female. D'eon, says Burrows, is "to some extent being tricked into a position; he's able to milk certain advantages, but it wouldn't have been his first choice."

Burrows does agree that d'Eon's later writings reflect the kind of penitent decision-making Kates believes was at the heart of d'Eon's transition—but more of "retrospective moral justification" than anything else. "I disagree with Kates to some extent because I don't think it's worked out in advance, or even as he goes along," Burrows says.

By the end of her life, it seems clear that she identified as a Christian woman. But the question of D'Eon's agency in her transition is central to understanding what kind of legacy she leaves behind, and it is something we're unlikely to ever really know. So what d'Eon *means*, what we project on to her, is dependent on contemporary gender and social politics.

In d'Eon's own lifetime, feminist pioneer Mary Wollstonecraft heralded her as proof that women could outstrip men if given the opportunity. A 19th century biographer would claim that d'Eon was simply cross-dressing in order to better seduce married women, reinforcing some kind of macho, masculine ideal; in the 20th century, d'Eon's story was analyzed in psycho-sexual terms and early sexologist Havelock Ellis coined the term "Eonism" to describe transvestitism. In the 21st century, she's become a transgender heroine—the Beaumont Society, a support organization for the transgender community, has taken her name in admiration (the Society did not return an email for comment)—as well as an anime star.



Burrows has struggled with how to make sense of d'Eon's life. "In some ways, he leaves less of a legacy than we might think," he says, "He doesn't leave a set of followers, he doesn't leave a number of people who behave the same way, but he is important in terms of how people are beginning to define themselves."

Kates is less equivocal. "I think what makes d'Eon so historically significant and such an important pioneer for today is not what he did but the extent to which he thought about it and gave ideas to it," he said. In d'Eon's philosophy and to some extent, the philosophy of 18th century European society, gender is not essential, it is fluid; one can make a decision about where to land in a kind of continuum, not only of gender but of morality as well. "This whole discussion we've been having the past 6 months about which bathrooms people should use and where we're groping towards is that a person should use the bathroom they feel most

comfortable with, society shouldn't be making that decision for them, this is right out of 1750s thinking," says Kates.

D'Eon is a complex figure, whether that figure is dressed in a Dragoon Captain's uniform or a Versailles ball-gown. Perhaps d'Eon was a victim of the power of an unchecked political state. Perhaps it's simply that she was a woman, a person, so ahead of her time, that it's taken more than 240 years to catch a glimpse of what she was trying to do.

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Indian 'oldest man ever' says yoga, celibacy key to age

00:35 EST, 18 August 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

Looking remarkably unlined for his claimed 120 years, an Indian monk who says he is the oldest man to have ever lived puts his longevity down to no sex or spices, and daily yoga.

Hindu monk Swami Sivananda was born on August 8, 1896, according to his passport. If true, his life would have spanned three centuries, but despite his apparent age he remains strong enough to perform yoga for hours at a time.

He is now applying to Guinness World Records to verify his claim. It currently lists Japan's Jiroemon Kimura, who died in June 2013 aged 116 years and 54 days, as the oldest man to have ever lived.

Indian monk Swami Sivananda, who claims to be 120 years old, is watched by one of his followers while practicing yoga in Kolkata

Sivananda, from the holy city of Varanasi, grew up in extreme poverty and chose to become a monk

Standing 1.58 metres (five feet two inches) tall, Sivananda sleeps on a mat on the floor and uses a wooden slab as a pillow

Sivananda says he owed his age to 'yoga, discipline, and celibacy'

India's passport authorities confirmed Sivananda's age from a temple register, the only record many Indians even decades younger have of their date of birth.

However it would be extremely difficult to independently verify his age.

Sivananda was featured by local media earlier this summer, with the Times of India noting he looked 50 years younger than his apparent age but taking his claims at face value.

Sivananda, from the holy city of Varanasi, grew up in extreme poverty and chose to become a monk, saying he owed his age to 'yoga, discipline, and celibacy'.

'I lead a simple and disciplined life. I eat very simply - only boiled food without oil or spices, rice and boiled daal (lentil stew) with a couple of green chillies,' he told AFP after a two-hour yoga session in Kolkata, the eastern Indian city where he had come for a short visit.

Standing 1.58 metres (five feet two inches) tall, Sivananda sleeps on a mat on the floor and uses a wooden slab as a pillow.

'I avoid taking milk or fruits because I think these are fancy foods. In my childhood I slept many days on an empty stomach,' he said.

In this photograph taken on August 2, 2016, Sivananda reacts after his followers presented him with a birthday cake in Kolkata

Sivananda, who was born in colonial-era India without electricity, cars or telephones, says he is not enthused by new technology and prefers being on his own

Fit and without any medical complications, Sivananda lives independently and even travels alone on trains

'Earlier people were happy with fewer things. Nowadays people are unhappy, unhealthy and have become dishonest, which pains me a lot,' Sivananda said

Sivananda said he had not previously come forward to claim the record because he did not seek publicity, but was eventually persuaded by his followers to apply.

The elderly man lost both parents before he was six and was given away by his relatives to a spiritual guru, whom he travelled with around India before settling in Varanasi.

Fit and without any medical complications, he lives independently and even travels alone on trains.

Sivananda, who was born in colonial-era India without electricity, cars or telephones, says he is not enthused by new technology and prefers being on his own.

'Earlier people were happy with fewer things. Nowadays people are unhappy, unhealthy and have become dishonest, which pains me a lot,' he said.

'I just want people to be happy, healthy and peaceful.'

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News



Armed man injures six in Swiss train attack



Policemen stand by a train at the station in Salez, eastern Switzerland, after a man set a fire and stabbed passengers credit: Newspictures.ch/Afp

By Rory Mulholland, PARIS

13 AUGUST 2016 • 5:41PM

man armed with a knife has set a train carriage on fire in Switzerland, leaving six people, including a six-year-old child, in hospital with stab wounds and burns.

The 27-year-old Swiss citizen carried out the attack on a train travelling near the border with Liechtenstein, and was also injured, regional police in Saint Gallen said.

The motive for the attack was not immediately known, but it is the latest in a series of similar assaults in Europe over the past month, including an attack by a 17-year-old Afghan asylum seeker who injured five people with an axe and a knife on a train in Germany.

Swiss police said the possibility of terrorism was unlikely. "A terrorism background still seems very, very far-fetched," the spokesman said.



The man set a train carriage in Switzerland on fire using a flammable liquid and stabbed passengers, injuring six people including a six-year-old child, police said CREDIT: NEWSPICTURES.CH/AFP

The incident that took place around 1 pm UK time between the towns of Buchs and Sennwald as the train was approaching Salez station.

"According to the information we have for the time being, the 27-year-old Swiss man poured out a flammable liquid ... (which) caught fire," police said, adding that the man "was also armed with at least one knife".

The carriage was left covered with blood, local media reported.

The injured, including the suspected attacker, were admitted to various hospitals with burn and stab wounds, some of them severe.

The victims included two men aged 17 and 50, and three women aged 17, 34 and 43, who were among the dozens of people on the train at the time of the attack.

Three rescue helicopters were rushed to the scene along with police, firefighters, and ambulances.

Police said the train had suffered damages upwards of 100,000 Swiss francs (£80,000).



The platform at Salez train station is cleaned after the attack credit: arnd wiegmann/reuters

The train assault was the first attack of its kind in Switzerland in recent memory.

There have been a string of assaults on the public in neighbouring France and Germany, as well as Belgium, over the past 18 months, most of which were claimed by the Islamic State (Isil) terror group.

Isil claimed responsibility for last month's knife and axe train attack in Germany, and later released video of the teenage assailant being shot dead by police as he fled the scene.

In another attack last month in Germany, a Syrian man wounded 15 people when he blew himself up at a music festival.

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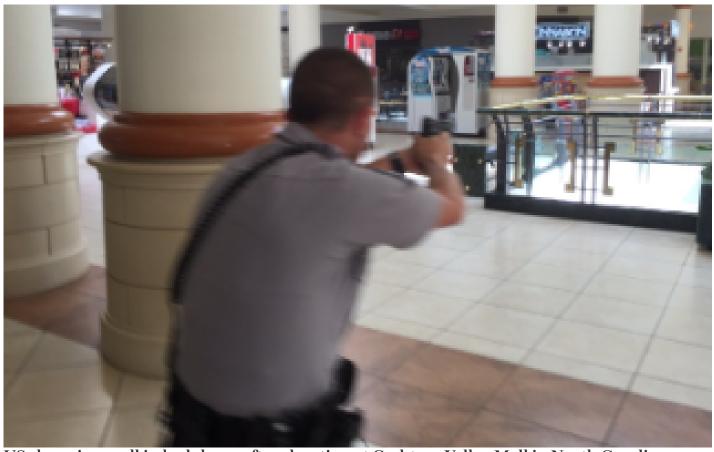


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By Dana Matthews on 08/08/2016 weekinweird.com

WEEK In Weird

Investigating the Haunted Joshua Ward House, Home To Salem's Most Notorious Witch Killer

LAIR OF THE WITCH KILLER

witchkillerpost

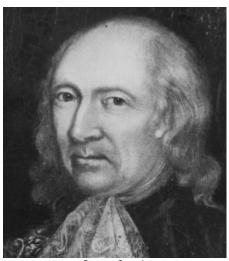


Joshua_Ward_House_in_Salem_MA

Salem, Massachusetts needs no introduction. Not only is it one of the most legendary places in America, it's one of the most beloved travel destinations for fans of history, witchcraft, and ghosts. With so many spooky buildings to explore, it's hard to nail down exactly which ones are the most haunted, but we might argue that the award go to the Joshua Ward House, lair of Salem's most prolific witch torturer, and current home to his many victims.

The infamous brick house on Washington street in Salem, Massachusetts stands where the residence of Sheriff George "The Strangler" Corwin used to sit. Corwin was the most nefarious interrogator and witch killer in the history of Salem, and built his terror-inducing reputation by

being an absolute monster. He had developed numerous cruel methods for getting "witches" to admit their allegiance to Satan, one of which included tying the neck of the accused to their ankles until a stream of blood exploded out of their nose.



GeorgeCorwin

"The Strangler" was responsible for the legal torture and murder of nineteen men and women who were accused of practicing witchcraft between 1692 – 1693, and much of these punishments occurred in a jail constructed in Corwin's own cellar.

Corwin was also responsible for the death of Giles Corey,

one of the Salem Witch Trial's most famous alleged warlocks. Corey refused to confess to the crime, even after days of torture, so Corwin had to come up with an even more painful way force the man to admit his crimes.

One after the other, large stones were placed on Giles Corey's chest, slowly crushing him to death while a group of men looked on. With his last remaining breath, Giles Corey cursed George Corwin for his sadistic methods, demanding "more weight", and then died.

As it turns out, some believe that Corey may very well have had some supernatural abilities, because just four years later, Corwin died abruptly of a blood ailment, and his body was buried in the basement of the house he

tortured so many people to death in. Bad idea.



GilesPicture



Tunnel_in_Fire_Place_Arch_of_Joshua_Ward_House

Today the Joshua Ward House sits on the very location of George Corwin's personal torture chamber, though his body was moved many years ago for fear of being desecrated. That certainly hasn't stopped the house from being one of the most active buildings in town. Unsurprisingly, both Giles Corey and George "The Strangler" Corwin are both said to haunt the building.



image

There's another ghost, however, who has captured the curiosity of paranormal investigators from all over the world thanks to one very strange photograph. According to ghost hunters, the Joshua Ward House is also haunted by the ghost of an unnamed woman believed to have been tortured and killed at the hands of The Strangler. The restless spirit was photographed by a Carlson Reality realtor named Dale Lewinsky, who had been snapping polaroids for an upcoming listing of the home. It wasn't until she returned home that she noticed the ghostly woman standing in the house's doorway.



e3jlcj5k4wziw61zxhps

Over the years, countless people have claimed to experience paranormal activity in the Joshua Ward House, ranging everywhere from the discovery of warm candle wax in candleless rooms to the manifestation of burning scratches on arms and backs. Some have even reported being strangled by a pair of

phantom hands that many have blamed on the angry ghost of George Corwin himself.

Salem is rich with paranormal history, and for most of us, a definite bucket list location to visit if not to investigate. There's numerous tours that take the brave and curious to the Joshua Ward Home for a quick adventure, but for anyone thinking about planning a trip to Salem, you should consider joining us on the Strange



Escapes "Witching You Were Here" cruise, a trip on a haunted cruise liner which begins in Salem and heads straight to the Bermuda triangle!

Dana Matthews

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Screen Shot 2016-08-08 at 4.02.36 PM

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Is there a Nessie in the Humber?

03:24 EST, 11 September 2016 | dailymail.co.uk



MailOnline US - news. sport. celebrity. science and health stories

Is there a Nessie in the Humber? Hunt is on for beast with a head the size of an elephant's, six humps and terrifying flashing eyes'

.com • Mike Covell, from Humber Monster Watch, trying to

He has even formed a patrol to monitor the shores of

Hull's famous river

- In the 1920s, Hull lived in fear of the sea beast with numerous sightings
- In 1925, a 'giant octopus' was found by fishermen on Withernsea beach

By Harvey Day For Mailonline

A search has been launched to track down the 'Humber Monster,' a sea beast said to have a head the size of an elephant, six humps and terrifying flashing eyes.

Mike Covell, from the Humber Monster Watch, is hoping to track down the creature in time for Hull taking up the title of the UK City of Culture in 2017.

Mr Covell has even formed a patrol to monitor the shores of the city's famous river.



A search has been launched to track down the 'Humber Monster,' a sea beast said to have a head the size of an elephant, six humps and terrifying flashing eyes. Pictured, the Humber Bridge over the River Humber near Hull

'Throughout the 1920s, trawlermen from Hull had reported strange sightings of a creature in the Humber and the North Sea,' he said, according to The Express.

He added: 'In 1923, a Hornsea school teacher was swimming off the coast when he was attacked by an unknown sea creature.'

In the 1920s, Hull lived in constant fear of the sea

beast with numerous sightings and updates in newspaper reports.

Eyewitnesses at the time said it could travel at more than 100mph, had a head the size of an elephant, six humps and terrifying flashing eyes.

In 1934, another frightening encounter with the monster was recorded, this time by Thomas Atkinson.

He had been walking with his wife and children by the river when they witnessed something black swimming in the Humber, according to the Hull Daily Mail.

Mike Covell, from the Humber Monster Watch, is hoping to track down the creature in time for Hull taking up the title of the UK City of Culture in 2017. Above, the infamous 1934 image of the mythical Loch Ness monster

The creature turned to face the family and stared at them with its eyes the size of portholes until they fled in terror.

In 1925, a 'giant octopus' was found by fishermen on Withernsea beach, near Hull.

It was reportedly about 6ft long with eight tentacles full of suckers.





Earlier this week a new photograph taken by a man in Scotland opened up the intriguing possibility that two Loch Ness monsters are at large.

lan Campbell, 56, was on a bicycle ride with his son and a family friend when he spotted two big 'creatures' apparently swimming across the Loch together.

The council regulatory officer, who says he is not a man 'given to flights of fancy', is convinced that the two 'monsters' he saw and photographed were both about 30ft in length.

Among the most famous claimed sightings is a photograph taken in 1934 by Colonel Robert

Kenneth Wilson.

It was later exposed as a hoax by one of the participants, Chris Spurling, who, on his deathbed, revealed that the pictures were staged.

Other sightings include James Gray's picture from 2001 when he and friend Peter Levings were out fishing on the Loch.

Hugh Gray's blurred photo of what appears to be a large sea creature was published in the Daily Express in 1933.



The picturesque Loch Ness (pictured) is a popular tourist destination because of the legend of the elusive monster

The first reported sighting of the monster is said to have been made in 565AD by the Irish missionary St Columba when he came across a giant beast in the River Ness.

But no one has ever come up with a satisfactory explanation for the sightings - although earlier this year 'Nessie expert' Steve Feltham, who has spent 24 years watching the Loch, said he thought it was actually a giant Wels Catfish, native to waters near the Baltic and Caspian seas in Europe.

An online register lists more than 1,000 total Nessie sightings, created by Mr Campbell, the man behind the Official Loch Ness Monster Fan Club and is available at www.lochnesssightings.com.



Comments (

EX.PAT .SICILY, Palermo, Italy, about an hour ago

Thats not Nessie mk2Its a refugee Submarine on its way up north

, Gondolin, United Kingdom, about an hour ago

I travel over The River Humber about 400 times a year. But I have poor eye- sight, therefore I have not seen The Nessie in The Humber.

MOZART, Solihull, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

Is it Emily Thornberry???

9/11/2016 Is there a Nessie in the Humber? Hunt is on for beast 'with a head the size of an elephant's, six humps and terrifying flashing eyes' | Daily Mail Online

Ben10, Bristol, about 2 hours ago

Picture 2 is a fake admitted on the taker's deathbed.

attila the hun, Frizington UK., United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

Tell him to use a decent camera because all the other photo's that were taken at Loch Ness are rubbish.

Bonzer Bogan, Kent, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

Just keep on taking the pills

Grumpy Bertie, HALIFAX, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

Russian sub with dodgy satnav, I bet.

Countrylass, Manchester, about 3 hours ago

It is a near perfect description of the Nautilus from Disney's version of 20000 Leagues. Look carefully and you will probably see James Mason at the helm.

Glynn13, Churchill, about 3 hours ago

Isn't that Prescotts old stomping ground?

non PC, Mar Menor, Spain, about 3 hours ago

Hull - Humber - Humbug

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Is this Jesus's tomb? Geologist's findings could show where Christ was buried

thesun.co.uk

The tomb is in East Jerusalem and was first found in 1980

By HANNAH FERRETT 17th September 2016, 11:26 am

ONE thing's for sure – these claims are going to be pretty controversial.

It's been suggested that Jesus Christ could be buried at a site in East Jerusalem.



Tomb

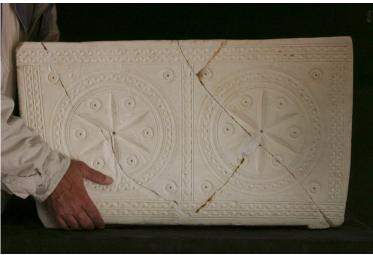
Getty Images This is the tomb in question

The area is called Talpiot Tomb and it was first found in 1980.

There are nine burial boxes in the tomb, and they all have names with links to the New Testament of the Bible on them.

It all caused people to suggest it was where Jesus's body was buried, and was proof he'd married and had a child. This was highly controversial, given Christians believe Jesus

was resurrected.



ossuaries

Getty Images

The bone boxes are known as ossuaries

All of this was included in the 2007 movie The Lost Tomb of Jesus, but unsurprisingly it didn't go down well with everyone.

Some people rubbished the claims, saying all the names etched on the boxes were so common at the time there's no way of drawing any conclusions.

Tallest Jesus statue unveiled

On top of this, an Israelli collector bought a burial box inscribed with 'James son of Joseph brother of Jesus' in the 70s.

It was suggested that if this could be linked to the tomb, the collection of names made it much more likely the tomb was that of Jesus's family.

Then, geologist Dr Aryeh E. Shimron did some powerful research.

He found a chemical link between the James (son of Joseph, brother of Jesus) ossuary and the ossuaries of the Talpiot tomb. He matched elements in soil samples from the tomb and bone box.



ossuaries

Getty Images They each have etchings on them

"I think I've got really powerful, virtually unequivocal evidence that the James ossuary spent most of its lifetime, or death time, in the Talpiot Tomb," he told New York Times.

This wasn't a quick process either.

He spent years comparing soil from different tombs and ossuaries.

He didn't draw any conclusions from his research though, that all came from others

who began to wonder if it could mean Jesus of Nazareth, his wife Mary Magdalene and SON Judah were laid to rest there.

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'It's just weird:' Seattle man finds stranger living in his attic

komonews.com

KOMONEWS.com

By Kristen Drew Tuesday, July 19th 2016

SEATTLE (**KOMO**)-- When Davis Wahlman arrived at his Green Lake home on Monday night he noticed a couple of lights on inside that usually would be off.

"I don't immediately freak out but I'm like 'This is not ordinary," recalled Wahlman, who is an employee at KOMO News.

Once inside, Wahlman also found a screen from a bathroom window inside the tub, but he didn't think too much of it until the next morning when strange noises in the attic startled him. The bathroom window, which is a small space, is located upstairs but can't be easily accessed without something or someone to lift a person.

"I am kind of jolted out of bed," said Wahlman. "I hear rummaging around above me, which I know is the attic so I'm like 'That's kind of weird.""

As Wahlman tried to figure out what was going on he noticed a light was on in the office. The door was locked so he knocked but got no response. He then tried to find something to protect himself then knocked on the door again. It was then he heard a woman's voice.

"Jimmy? Is that you, Jimmy?" recalled Wahlman. "I'm like 'No, it's not Jimmy. Who is this and why are you In my house?"

Wahlman immediately called 911. Then the woman -- a stranger -- opened the office door and was face-to-face with him.

"I'm like 'Who the heck are you?' Why are you in my house?" Wahlman said. "And she just keeps kind of going 'This is my house. I live here. I've been here for three days. Jimmy said I could live here, Jimmy said I could stay here."

Wahlman tried to keep the woman inside the house until police arrived, but she got away. He said his phone log shows it took at least 18 minutes for an officer to arrive after he called 911, which was frustrating to him.

"I absolutely support the cops, I love the police officers and I'm really happy they did show up, but as I'm telling someone on dispatch that there's someone in my house, 'Hey, please bring help' and it took 18 minutes -- that's a little disappointing," said Wahlman.

A spokesman for Seattle Police said records show the call was received at 9:01 a.m. and the first officer was dispatched at 9:07 am. The spokesman said at 9:03 a.m. the victim reported the suspect left the home in an unknown direction.

Wahlman is now puzzled as to how the woman even got into his home -- nothing appeared stolen. There were just a few things out of place including a fire escape ladder that Wahlman found hanging from the deck, which the suspect likely found inside a closet after gaining access to the home.

"It's just weird, you know?" said Wahlman.

Wahlman said the woman living in the attic had dark, shoulder-length hair and wore gym warm-up pants with a black track-style jacket and white hood. She also had a white-knit cap and carried a backpack.

On Tuesday, a locksmith changed the locks on all the doors of the home where Wahlman's family members have lived for nearly 90 years. For Wahlman, it's hard to believe someone was staying there without anyone noticing.

"To come into a house like this, in this neighborhood, that's clearly being lived in that's bold," Wahlman said.

Seattle Police detectives in the burglary unit are now reviewing the report.

KOMO KOMO Seattle, WA
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Woman HAUNTED by 'Jack the Ripper' who burns BIBLES at night and throws her down stairs

express.co.uk



Woman HAUNTED by 'Jack the Ripper' who burns BIBLES at night and throws her down stairs

A TERRIFIED mum has spoken out after claiming she has spent nearly

four decades being terrorised by the "violent ghost of Jack the Ripper".

By Oli Smith

PUBLISHED: 20:40, Tue, Sep 6, 2016 | UPDATED: 17:52, Thu, Sep 8, 2016

Gaynor Issitt said the terrifying supernatural presence had been plaguing her household for as long as she could remember.

The 58-year-old mum-of-three said the evil presence was in fact Jack the Ripper, the infamous murderer who killed 11 women in Whitechapel in 1888.

She said the spirit - one of many who haunt the house - burned bibles at night and even attacked her in her sleep.

She described being punched and hit around the head and said her unwelcome guest was also responsible for fires starting inexplicably around her house.



Ms Issitt said she has to "share the property" in Leicestershire with the evil spirits.

The haunted house has seen several exorcists and priests all try in vain to rid the property of its ghouls.

The poor woman claims she was once dragged from her bed by her ankles by a thuggish poltergeist and has also been pushed down the stairs.

She spoke out as September began - the month she claims when the ghost is strongest in the house.

Ms Issitt said the ghost would not leave her alone and made her home into a terrifying haunted hell.

But, she refuses to move out, claiming that she loves the house where she brought up all of her children.

I've been dragged out of bed by my ankles, punched all over, whacked round the head

Gaynor Issitt

Mark Vernon, a paranormal expert, said that he believes the woman's claims of the supernatural.

Mr Vernon is convinced that it's the true ghost of Jack the Ripper, the serial killer who murdered 11 women around Whitechapel in London.

He added: "I feel sorry for what she has gone through, I have never seen a house with so much activity going on."



SWNS

Ms Issitt is living in the house alone, after her partner Andrew Belton, 43 - who has also been attacked by the poltergeist - moved to a care home following an accident that left him paralysed.

She said the apparition called Jack has been known to start fires, burning the heads off family photographs as well as furniture.

The young mother added: "He has started fires so I have to keep buckets of water around the house. He physically attacks me, and I have been left bruised in the past.

"We've also heard growling noises and my partner has seen apparitions of a man,

woman and a little girl around the house.

"We have never spoken directly, but we've recorded them and they swear and say they're going to murder someone."



SWNS

The former carer said: "The ghosts have been here for as long as I've lived here - the man that used to live here told me they were here before me too.

"One in particular is very violent and aggressive.

"I know of people who have come out of there not just with scratches but with gashes on their arm.

"But I'll never move out - I love my home, all my kids were brought up here and I won't be bullied out by a ghost.

"We've had priests and exorcists and all

sorts over the years, but nothing makes a difference - so I've just learned to live with it."

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Japanese fisherman uses karate skills to fend off bear

upi.com

By Daniel Uria | Sept. 2, 2016 at 3:02 PM

A 63-year-old Japanese fisherman was able to fend off a 6-foot tall Asian black bear by poking it repeatedly in the eye. The unidentified man, who has a black belt in karate, sustained minor injuries and was able to make his own way to the hospital following the encounter. Photo by ostill/Shutterstock

MAEBASHI, Japan, Sept. 2 (UPI) -- A Japanese fisherman called upon his martial arts skills after being attacked by a large bear near a local river.

According to The Straits Times, the 6-foot tall Asian black bear approached the man as he was fishing near the Jizo River on Thursday afternoon.

"At first glance it seemed like something was there, and it was a bear with an imposing stance. It came pouncing towards me when my eyes met the bear's," he told media. "Its rounded ears were perfectly circular just like a teddy bear's, and its face was so huge."

The 63-year-old man, who holds a black belt in Karate engaged with the bear and managed to fend off its attack.

"The bear had such, such great strength. I was knocked over when it leapt at me. It scratched me and bit me. But in the end I managed to trick the bear, poked it in the eyes and it ran away," he said.

Gunma police told the Japan Times they had received reports of bears in the area and discouraged residents from fighting back as the fisherman had done.

"If you witness a bear, don't fight. Walk away quietly and report it to the police instead," an official said,

The fisherman was able to bring himself to a nearby hospital where he was treated for minor injuries after receiving bite and claw marks on his body head and arms.

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Statue of Jesus OPENS EYES in 'miracle' which has baffled paranormal sleuths

18:32, 9 Aug 2016 Updated 12:31, 10 Aug 2016 By Rachel Bishop

mirror.co.uk



Statue of Jesus OPENS HIS EYES in Mexican church leaving believers calling it a miracle

Spooky footage of a Jesus statue opening its eyes has left some believers claiming it is a miracle.

Paranormal investigators have scoured over the video which appears to show the figure quickly open its eyes at a church in Mexico's state of Coahuila de Zaragoza.

While a church service appears to continue in the background, the effigy then seems to slam its eyes shut in the eerie clip.

While many believe the footage proves the statue in the Chapel of Saltillo came to life, others say it was merely an optical illusion or the video was doctored.



Jesus Statue opens eves



The footage was shot by a believer at achurch in Mexico's state of Coahuila de Zaragoza The clip shows the Jesus statue initially with his eyes closed

According to Elancasti.com.ar, the footage was shot last June, but it quickly went viral after it was posted on Adimensional this week a web portal that researches unusual and paranormal cases.

Site manager and paranormal activity expert Ivan Escamilla has quashed rumours there is anything "unusual" about the footage.

But suddenly the effigy appears to open its eyes

Paranormal investigators have claimed the footage has not been doctored

He said more than 20 paranormal specialists, as well as priests, sculptors, editors and special effects designers had spent weeks analysing the clip.

He said the footage was real and they found no proof it had been doctored.

Jesus Statue opens eyes



Jesus Statue opens eyes

However, authorities under the Diocese of Saltillo dismissed the footage and refused to watch it.

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Jesus Statue opens eyes

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Jim Hughes is very proud of his giant cock

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Jim Hughes is very proud of his giant cock

Jim Hughes took half an hour to create the cockerel (Picture: Central Press)

Pensioner Jim Hughes is very proud, and it's easy to see why.

While his wife has been on holiday he's unveiled his giant cock and it's become something of a tourist attraction.

He's even given it a name – Jock the cock.

Jim, 73, trimmed his bush and has even adorned its head with a red comb in handy work that took just half an hour to create.

Underneath, it's actually an ivy-covered tree and stands at 14ft tall at the end of his garden in East Ewmyss, Fife.



Jim's wife was in for a surprise when she got home to his newly trimmed bush (Picture: Central Press)

He said: 'It's in the front garden and looks out into the street. Since then, quite a few people have been stopping to take photographs.

'I call it Jock. And it's crowing for independence.'

His wife Moira, 73, said: 'Well, I was away on holiday and when I came back it was like that. I know he was trying to make something but that was a surprise.

'People keep stopping to look at it. Quite a few have passed remarks and they think it's clever.

'I think we'll keep it. I don't really have a choice.'

Massive cock in front garden is tourist attraction © 2016 Associated Newspapers Limited Back to top

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Josh Duggar won't apologize for sex abuse and adultery: 'He believes external forces were to blame'

rawstory.com



Travis Gettys 14 Jul 2016 at 09:51 ET



Josh Duggar

(Screenshot/YouTube)

Josh Duggar may — or maybe not, depending on the source — be returning to his family's TLC reality show.

The prolific evangelical family is hurting for money, despite their occasional and flagrant abuse of free-food giveaways at fast-food joints, so they're at least considering cashing in their eldest son's molestation and adultery scandals for TV ratings.

"Josh will appear on the next season of his sisters' series," a source told *InTouch*. "The plan is for him to address everything he's done. What he has to say will be ratings gold, and TLC — and the Duggars — know it."

The 28-year-old Duggar resigned from his job with the anti-LGBT Family Research Council last year after admitting to molesting four of his sisters and another girl while they were sleeping about a decade earlier.

He then entered a Christian rehabilitation center for months after admitting to extramarital affairs when the Ashley Madison hack revealed his accounts on the adultery website.

The source said Duggar would address those scandals, but he would not apologize.

"Josh will cover everything and he will maintain the family line that God has saved his soul and guided him back to the right path," the source said. "But one thing you probably won't hear is that he's actually sorry, as he believes that external forces were to blame for his behavior."

However, another report strongly disputed rumors that Duggar would appear on his sisters' spinoff TLC program, "Jill & Jessa: Counting On."

Their parents, Jim Bob and Michelle Duggar, have reportedly been torn apart by their eldest son's sex abuse, pornography addiction and infidelities.

The couple apparently disagreed on how to punish their adult son for his embarrassing mistakes, which led to the cancellation of their own popular TLC reality TV show, "19 and Counting."

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English Heritage 'deadly serious' about bid to get jousting into **Olympics**

Mark Brown Arts correspondent Wednesday 20 July 2016

theguardian.com

English Heritage 'deadly serious' about bid to get jousting into Olympics

Organisation lobbies International Olympic Committee and starts petition to get sport played by Henry VIII into games by 2020



Jousting demands high levels of athleticism and agility, English Heritage says. Photograph: Jane Barlow/PA English Heritage said jousting should be seen as England's first national sport. Photograph: Robert for more than 1,000 years, according to English Heritage. Photograph: Robert Smith/English Heritage Trust

There is far more to it than two armoured horse riders hurtling towards each other with 12ft lances. Jousting demands levels of athleticism, agility and equestrianism that make it an ideal candidate for the Olympics, English Heritage argues.

The organisation has launched a campaign to get jousting recognised as an Olympic sport in time for Tokyo 2020.

"We are being deadly serious," said Lucy Hutchings, English Heritage's head of projects. "It is an incredible Smith/English Heritage Trust Jousting has been around spectator sport, a really fascinating thing to watch. The skill of the knight and the horses make it a great thing to witness ... we absolutely believe it deserves its place at the Olympic table."

English Heritage has held preliminary talks with the International Olympic Committee and the Fédération Equestre Internationale, and on Thursday it launches an online petition.

Hutchings said the IOC was in the process of making the Olympic programme more flexible and bringing in a rule that allowed the host nation to make its own proposals for additional events.



English Heritage said jousting should be seen as England's first national sport. Photograph: Robert Smith/English Heritage Trust Jousting has been around for more than 1,000 years, according to English Heritage. Photograph: Robert Smith/English Heritage

Tokyo has been considering skateboarding, climbing and surfing. "If skateboarding can be included then jousting has a good chance," said Hutchings.

Dominic Sewell, English Heritage's jousting expert, agreed. "Given what sports have been submitted to the Olympics over the years, I don't think there is any reason that something which has been a sport for over a thousand years should not be considered.

"If the sport organises itself, there is no reason why we could not be ready for Tokyo."

Sewell said jousting, which requires "a huge amount of skill and involves a daily training regime", ticked lots of

Olympic boxes. "You have to be strong, not just physically but mentally, so you can sit fearlessly in your saddle, face your rival and offer yourself as a target."

Just like dressage, it also requires an enormous amount of equestrian training. Horses must be persuaded to accept a rider dressed in 20kg of steel armour and to gallop at an opponent at speeds of up to 30mph.



English Heritage said jousting should be seen as England's first national sport. Photograph: Robert Smith/English Heritage Trust Jousting has been around for more than 1,000 years, according to English Heritage. Photograph: Robert Smith/English Heritage

"Horses being prey animals, they are naturally designed to run away from things, so to persuade it to run towards another large clanging thing at speed takes time," Sewell said. He added that jousting should be seen as England's first national sport.

Jousting's heyday was in the 15th and 16th centuries, with Henry VIII one of its most famous advocates. Historians have recently speculated that the reason Henry became such a cruel and petty tyrant is that jousting injuries brought about a change in his personality.

Trust The Olympics have a history of accepting new sports, including beach volleyball in 1996, and golf and rugby sevens in Rio de Janeiro this year. Baseball was added in 1998 but taken out after 2008.

English Heritage said jousting was a popular sport not only in England, and not only at the castles where it will this summer be organising jousting events.

Tournaments were held from Belgium to New Zealand, it said, and jousting was recognised as a sport by a number of US states. It has been Maryland's official sport since 1962.



Women to take on men in medieval jousts at English Heritage sites

Kenilworth Castle is first of four properties to include women jousters in sport where 'knights' in full armour ride against each other with lances

English Heritage tournaments often feature knights from all over the world, said Hutchings, although she admitted skills were particularly high in the UK. "We'd have a very good chance of doing

well [in the Olympics], I think."

The petition was launched as Team GB prepares to head to this year's games in Rio. Anyone who cannot wait until Tokyo 2020 to watch some jousting should go to Framlingham Castle in Suffolk this weekend.

Other events will take place later in the summer at Pendennis Castle in Cornwall, Carisbrooke Castle on the Isle of Wight and Bolsover Castle in Derbyshire.

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Judge allows lawsuit over creepy letters to move forward

August 12, 2016 yahoo.com

ELIZABETH, N.J. (AP) — A New Jersey couple who claim they were scared away from their home after receiving creepy letters from someone named "The Watcher" can move forward with a lawsuit against the home's former owners, a Superior Court judge ruled on Thursday.

Judge Camille Kenny rejected a motion to dismiss the lawsuit but threw out some of the claims made by Derek and Maria Broaddus, including their contentions that ex-owners John and Andrea Woods intentionally or negligently caused emotional distress when they sold the house in June 2014, NJ.com reported (http://bit.ly/2aGdCyu).

Derek and Maria Broaddus, who have three children, bought the house in Westfield for nearly \$1.4 million, but they refused to move in due to three eerie letters they said they received from a person with a "mentally disturbed fixation" on the home.

They have claimed that one of the letters they received read: "Do you need to fill the house with the young blood I requested? Once I know their names I will call to them and draw them too (sic) me." The person signs the letters as "The Watcher."

The couple claims the Woods were aware of the person and should have warned them about a letter they received from the person who claimed ownership of the home.

The Woods' attorney, Richard Kaplow, said state law didn't require his clients to disclose an off-site social condition.

Kenny's ruling indicated there may be little evidence that the previous owners knew about the letters.

"The linchpin of this case is that one letter," Kenny said, noting that Andrea Woods had disclosed the letter and went to the police with Maria Broaddus to make a report after closing on the house.

If that letter is the only information the sellers had, Kenney said, the Woods can seek a summary judgment of the case in their favor.

Information from: NJ Advance Media.

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Judo medallist beaten up while celebrating bronze medal win at Rio Olympics

metro.co.uk

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What must have been as one of the proudest days of Dirk Van Tichelt's life ended in a trip to hospital after the judo medallist was assaulted on Copacabana beach.

The Belgian had just secured bronze in the Olympic 73kg judo competition and was out in Rio that night to celebrate.

But things took a turn for the worse when he was punched in the face by a thief who stole his training partner's mobile phone.

The 32-year-old, who could clearly handle himself in most combat situations, was hit as he chased the thief down the popular beach, the Belgian Olympic Committee (BOC) said.

The incident came to light when Van Tichelt appeared for media duty yesterday sporting a black eye.

He was taken to hospital for observation but was otherwise unhurt.

BOC communications director Luc Rampaer said: 'His training partner's phone was stolen and as Dirk ran after the thief, he was punched in the face by someone else.

'The police were nearby so he made a formal complaint and then was seen by a doctor at the hospital as a precaution, although there was nothing serious.'

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in-defense-of-the-horror Julia Legare Original Story

This one is getting grouped in with my Creepypastas, but it's a little bit more widely circulated (and widely believed.) There are a bunch or really interesting takes and stories about this, but this version seems to be the most widely requested.

"Julia Legare" narrated by CreepyPastaJr

A few years ago I was often found with friends exploring old, supposedly haunted, places. One day we found ourselves at the Edisto First Presbyterian Church, where a girl named Julia Legare was buried in her family mausoleum in 1852 after presumably dying of diphtheria.

Passersby reported hearing screams coming from the graveyard during the next week, but never investigated the cause of it. Fifteen years later, when they opened the door of the mausoleum to inter the next family member who died, they found her skeleton huddled in the corner beside the door. Streaks of dry blood remained as a monument to her fierce struggle to escape fate.

Well, when we got there my friends thought it would be a funny idea to shut the heavy stone door of the mausoleum behind me and leave me overnight. I was stranded, unable to move the stone slab without help. For what seemed like an eternity I struggled in vain, just as Julia once had. Eventually, in the complete darkness, I had no choice but to resign myself to the night ahead of me.

I've never been claustrophobic, but the stale air held a pressure that made breathing hard. It felt like an overwhelming sadness was literally pushing down on my shoulders. As time slowly slipped by, my initial anger faded into a sense of fear and, eventually, despair.

Some time later, the scratches began. They were faint at first, I was sure it was my imagination, but they seemed to become louder—clearer—as time passed. Seemed to become more frantic. There was no doubt that something was trying to get in the door... or trying to get out. I huddled into one of the corners farthest from the door and covered my ears, but nothing could drown out the sounds. It only lasted for a few minutes, but each second was an unbearable eternity.

I grew so distraught that I finally screamed, or thought I did, until I realized that the voice was not my own. It echoed through the dark, tiny confines of the mausoleum. It was a wail of unrestrained pain and absolute overwhelming fear. Moments later, I realized that the scratching had stopped. For the first time I could distinctly make out the sound of a young girl sobbing, the pitiful and choking gasps of someone without a shred of hope left to them.

I felt such sorrow at the moment, such pain, that I think I forgot how to be afraid. In my heart all her suffering seemed to resonate. The invisible weight of sadness I had felt all along became crushing. Tears filled my eyes as I shook, my entire being wracked with grief. Inexplicably, I even found myself apologizing aloud for what had happened to her between ragged breaths. Some part of me was so wrought with pity that I wanted to reach out and hold this girl in the darkness, a part held back only by the fear that something might truly be there to hold.

I can't say if she heard me or was even aware of my presence. The sobbing never stopped and the scratching at the door soon started anew.

At some point I must have passed out from hyperventilation. When I awoke, it was to the sound of the stone slab as it fell away from the doorway, and landed on the ground with a thud. Even the pale gray morning light was blinding after the absolute darkness. Thinking my friends had come back, I rushed out into the foggy morning and sucked in a mouthful of fresh air. I was shocked to find nobody around, but more eager to be away from that place.

I stumbled around the front of the church and went into to a small unlocked prayer house. I think previously it was a segregated mini-church for slaves, but regardless, I collapsed against the door and waited, distraught, until my friends finally arrived. I approached them as they clustered around the fallen door, two of them were kneeling next to it with faces of shock. I was sure they must be wondering how I could move it by myself. I was wrong.

In the growing light it was clear. There were dried bloody streaks covering the interior of the door. Some had light scratches where nails had grated across the surface. Many more were smooth as if left by bloody nubs.

When they noticed me, they all jumped. I saw fear in their eyes. My anger must have been clear. They looked down at my hands, thinking I had torn them open in my escape, then they shared a horrified look amongst themselves. They asked what had happened and I told them every detail of what I remembered in halting, angry, and equally horrified bits, wanting them to know all that I had been put through.

Finally, after I grudgingly got into the car and we started to head back, someone spoke up. My friend said to me, "We were afraid to say anything until you were back inside the car, but take a look at your face." When I reached from the back seat and adjusted the rear-view mirror, I saw that there was blood caked on my face. Just like the streaks upon the stone slab, there were dark red lines on either side, as if someone had run their torn fingers across my face while I slept, feeling the warmth of another for the first time in over a hundred years.

#creepypastas#creepy pastas#creepypasta narrations#creepypasta#creepypastaJr 19 notes

w1tch1ng-h0ur

The legend of Julia Legare

As far as ghost stories go on the island, the Presbyterian Church, or more specifically, its graveyard, is home to one of the most popular haunts around.

Back in the mid-1800s, Julia Legare was visiting family on the island. She became ill and slipped into a coma. Her family anxiously awaited the day she would wake up, but that day never came. The family physician declared the young girl dead.

The child was lovingly dressed for her funeral where loved ones would pay her one last goodbye... or so they thought.

In those days, long before the deceased were treated with embalming fluids to preserve the body before burial, the ceremonial activities surrounding death were conducted at a rapid pace in order to avoid the inevitable decomposition. Poor Julia was buried on the same day of her death after loved ones had a chance to pay their respects.

Her little body was taken from the church and interred in the family's mausoleum. After she was placed inside the crypt, the marble door was closed, and securely locked, providing a sense of finality to the tragic death of the child. late night visitors claimed to have heard screaming and cries coming from with in the mausoleum, but paid no attention to it.

Julia's family went on with their lives as best as they could after suffering the loss of a child so young and in time the pain of her death was replaced with happy memories from her life.

After 15 years had gone by, another death in the family required the mausoleum to be opened. It was then that the family realized what a tragic error they had made.

Julia's remains, which had so long ago been entombed, were crumpled at the foot of the mausoleum's door. her hand were stretched out as if she had been trying to escape. She had been buried alive.

#Scary story#scary#scary picture#southern ghost stories#ghost stories#paranormal 431 notes

Dolly Oesterreich, her "Bat Man," and one of the strangest sex scandals ever.

by Addison Nugent



In April 1930, the Los Angeles Times began publishing what would end up being months' worth of eye-popping details from an exceedingly strange court case. It involved a "comely" woman named Dolly, her murdered husband, and her lover, a man known as the "garret ghost" who, at Dolly's behest, lived a "bat-like life in hidden rooms."

The story of how the three were intertwined is worthy of the era's most lurid pulp novels.

Born in 1880, Walburga "Dolly" Korschel was a German immigrant who grew up on a poor Midwestern farm. In her early 20s she married Fred Oesterreich, the wealthy owner of a successful apron factory. The couple settled in Milwaukee but marital bliss was elusive—Fred drank too much and Dolly was sexually unsatisfied. "Her eyes and

her appetites would bring a long line of men into her life—and send one to his death," wrote the LA Times.

One uncharacteristically hot autumn day in 1913, Dolly asked Fred to send one of the factory's repairmen to the house to fix her sewing machine. When 17-year-old Otto Sanhuber knocked on the Oesterreichs' ornate double entry door, Dolly, then 33, answered wearing stockings, a silk robe, and nothing else. In the master bedroom the dusty old Singer machine remained untouched; the same could not be said for Mrs. Oesterreich. Their tryst that day marked the beginning of a multi-decade sexual relationship.

In the early days of their affair, Dolly and Sanhuber met in hotels. Soon they decided to throw caution to the wind and pursue their carnal pleasures from the comfort of the Oesterreichs' marital bed. But the heartland in 1913 was the epicenter of a moral conservatism that characterized pre-sexual revolution America. The neighbors grew suspicious of the frequent visits paid by a man Dolly referred to as her "vagabond half-brother."

Dolly had a solution: Sanhuber would quit his job and move into the Oesterreichs' attic. Fred never went up there and the lovers could continue their tryst safely out of sight from prying eyes. The only caveat was that young Sanhuber would have to abandon all human interaction save for the tantric time he spent each day with Mrs. Oesterreich. Sanhuber didn't mind. He had no family to speak of and, as the *LA Times* reported in 1930, he said he grew to love Dolly "as a boy loves his mother."



The attic, furnished with only a cot and a desk, became a blank canvas upon which the teenager projected his inner dream world. At night he devoured the piles of nautical adventure books that Dolly brought him each week from the library. Like the marooned castaways in his favorite novels, Sanhuber staved off madness by occupying his thoughts with a singular goal: his dream-turned-obsession was to write for the pulps.

Pulp fiction magazines were the descendants of the 19th-century "penny dreadful." For 10 cents readers could satisfy their prurient curiosities with tales of sex, murder, addiction, and madness. Pulps like *Argosy* (1882-1978) were famous for cover art featuring half-dressed damsels in distress awaiting a rescue hero. Perhaps when Dolly answered the door in her flimsy silk robe, Sanhuber saw an opportunity to live his art.

By 1918 Sanhuber had been living in the Oesterreichs' attic for five years undetected, having regular sex with Dolly, and even publishing some of his

stories under a pen name. Meanwhile, Fred began questioning his sanity: He heard inexplicable noises coming

from the attic, his cigars kept going missing, and he could swear that strange shadows passed outside his bedroom door some nights. He decided to move to Los Angeles that year, not knowing that the phantom haunting his Milwaukee mansion would follow him out West.

Dolly agreed to the move on the condition that the new house have an attic. She sent Sanhuber ahead and by the time the Oesterreichs arrived, the now 22-year-old was already settled in his new home.

In Los Angeles the Oesterreichs' marriage began to deteriorate. Fred drank even more than he did in Milwaukee and arguments between the couple became violent. On August 22, 1922 a particularly brutal fight broke out and Sanhuber, fearing for Dolly's life, ran downstairs brandishing Fred's two .25 caliber rifles. He fired three rounds straight into his rival's chest, killing him instantly.

The lovers decided to rig the scene to make it look like a home invasion: Sanhuber took Fred's diamond watch and locked Dolly in the closet. Once Sanhuber had safely snuck back up to the attic Dolly began screaming until one of the neighbors called the cops. The police had no reason to doubt Dolly's story—after all she couldn't have locked *herself* in the closet. So the merry widow inherited her husband's millions and bought herself a new house. With a spacious attic.

Even though there was no apparent need to continue hiding Sanhuber in the attic, after a decade the lovers' relationship had shifted into one based on dominance and submission. Years later Sanhuber would tell a jury that he was Dolly's "sex slave," imprisoned by his love for her.

Dolly started dating her lawyer, Herman Shapiro, at which point she began making a series of incriminating mistakes. Her first was to give Herman the diamond watch that had supposedly been stolen during the "robbery." Herman recognized the watch as Frank's but Dolly explained sweetly that she had found it under a seat cushion and saw no need to tell the police. According to the *LA Times*, which reported on the murder in 1923, that evening Dolly asked a third lover, Roy Klumb, to dispose of the murder weapons in the La Brea tar pits.

In 1923 the police found out about Frank's watch and Klumb, following a volatile breakup with Dolly, confessed to disposing of the guns. They arrested Dolly but still unable to explain how she had locked herself in the closet, were forced to drop the charges and release her from custody. During the hearings she made another damning mistake when she asked Shapiro to bring food to her attic-dwelling "vagabond half-brother." Sanhuber was happy to see Herman. He hadn't spoken to another man in over a decade and regaled the lawyer with tales of his sexual exploits. Shapiro kicked Sanhuber out of the attic that very day and the terrified young man fled to Canada.

Herman and Dolly's relationship ended on a sour note in 1930. Feeling spiteful, he told the police about Sanhuber who coincidentally, had just moved back to Los Angeles. By the time the ex-lovers were arrested the papers had gotten wind of the sordid tale and shutterbugs followed Dolly and Sanhuber everywhere. But the trial outcome was not as eventful as the public would have hoped: though the jury found Sanhuber guilty of manslaughter on July 1, the statute of limitations for such an offense was seven years. Eight years had passed since Frank's death. Sanhuber's charges was dropped.



Secret room shown at left is where Otto Sanhuber (right) is alleged to have been concealed by the standard Oesterreich (below center). Herman Shapiro (center above), attorney, is believed to solved the mystery which baffled police for eight years,

Dolly was acquitted, after which she found a new lover. They stayed together for 30 years, eventually marrying. She died a free woman in 1961.

Sanhuber left Los Angeles and disappeared. During the media frenzy that surrounded the trial he became known as "the Bat Man of Los Angeles" due to his formerly batcave-like living circumstances. (Superhero comics, the descendants of pulp fiction, did not exist in 1930 and neither did the gallantry now associated with the name "Batman.")

Thanks to the tabloid treatment Sanhuber received during the trial, the public saw him not as the tragic romantic he envisioned himself to be but as an immoral sexual deviant Walburga 'Dolly' Oesterreich being arraigned in court on the alleged charges of murdering her husband. Left to right: Detective Cline, Mrs. Oesterreich, Judge Channing Follette, and a court reporter. (Photo: Bettmann/ Getty Images) Dolly Oesterreich, c. 1930. (Photo: Public Domain) Dolly Oesterreich, c. 1930. (Photo: Public Domain) A newspaper clipping from the time. (Photo: Public Domain)

with a freaky penchant for attic living. The deputy district attorney called him a "perjurer of his own soul." Sanhuber may have been freed from the judgment of the law, but he would have to contend with the judgment of newspaper readers transfixed by the salacious story.

"Nothing in fiction is more dramatic than the story of the sudden quarrel in the hallway, the popping out of an armed jack-in-the-box, the struggle, the slaying, the locking of Mrs. Oesterreich in a closet with the key outside and the mysterious disappearance of the slayer back into his cubbyhole," said the *LA Times* in 1930. "Yes, it must be admitted fiction has been outdone again."

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US student declared dead in 2004 'found alive in North Korea after being kidnapped as Kim Jong-un's tutor'



A US student presumed dead for 12 years has reportedly been spotted alive in North Korea after being 'kidnapped' to be Kim Jong-un's personal tutor.

David Sneddon, who attended Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, vanished in China's Yunnan Province on August 14, 2004.

At the time, Chinese police said the 24-year-old, who was on a student

exchange programme, likely died in a hiking accident.

But now, it is claimed that he is alive in Pyongyang - after being 'abducted' to work as an English tutor to Kim more than a decade ago.



HelpFindDavid.com

David Sneddon, who attended Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, vanished in August 2004



REUTERS

It is claimed that David was actually 'abducted' to work as an English tutor to Kim Jong-un

David is reportedly living in the North Korean capital with a wife and two

children.

Choi Sung-yong, the head of South Korea's Abductees' Family Union, said new information shows the young man did not die in 2004.

Choi said he was, instead, kidnapped to serve as a personal English tutor to Kim, whose father was then leader of North Korea, Yahoo News Japan reports.

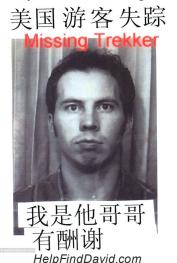
David, who was fluent in Korean at the time of his disappearance, is apparently married to a North Korean woman and still teaches English.

Despite Chinese officials' belief that the Mormon missionary died 12 years ago, his parents, Roy and Kathleen Sneddon, have long thought he was kidnapped.



HelpFindDavid.com

At the time, Chinese police said the 24-year-old likely died in a hiking accident



A missing poster for David, who has been described by loved ones as a 'skilled backpacker'

They believe he is 'likely being held captive against his will by the North Korean government', therefore cannot reach out to them.

Roy said the new report

regarding his son's whereabouts 'strengthens the contention that what we have said from the beginning about David being in North Korea was in fact correct', according to KU-TV.

The article has even prompted the U.S. Department of State to formally launch a search for David in North Korea, Deseret News reports.

But despite this, Roy and Kathleen remain cautious about the report.

Kathleen, a former university professor, said: "Part of the article may be correct and part of it may be conjecture... we just don't know."



HelpFindDavid.com

David's dad (right) and brother walk through Shangri-La with posters as they attempt to locate him



HelpFindDavid.com

The family have long thought David was kidnapped by the North Korean government

David's family has set up a website and Facebook page dedicated to the search for their son, which they frequently update.

At the time the young man went missing, he

was studying Mandarin in Beijing as part of his university's exchange programme.

He vanished in Shangri-La in north-western Yunnan province.

David, who has four brothers and six sisters, has been described by his loved ones as a 'skilled backpacker' and 'general sports enthusiast'.

He would now be 35 years old.





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HelpFindDavid.com

HelpFindDavid.com

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India: Three die as kite string slits their throats - BBC News

bbc.com



BB Three people, including two children, have died after their throats were slit by glasscoated strings used for flying kites on India's Independence Day.

Saanchi Goyal, 3, and Harry, 4, were looking out through the sunroof of their cars in different parts of Delhi when sharp strings slit their throats.

Zafar Khan, 22, died in the same manner when he was riding his motorbike.

Glass-coated strings are used to bring down competitors' kites, but they also end up injuring and killing people.

Many Indians fly kites to celebrate festivals and important occasions like the Independence Day, which is celebrated on 15 August.

But every year, there are reports of people dying or getting wounded from the kite strings - locally known as manja - treated with powdered glass or metal to sharpen them.

Similar strings killed a five-year-old boy in 2015 in the northern town of Moradabad, and a five-yearold girl died in Jaipur in 2014.

These strings also kill and maim hundreds of birds annually - at least 500 birds have been admitted to the Charity Birds Hospital in Delhi in the past three days alone, Indian media reports say. The hospital says it treats up to 8,000 birds every year.

On Monday, a policeman in Delhi was also injured from a sharpened string.

The Delhi government has now banned the use of sharpened mania to fly kites and promised to run campaigns to educate people about the dangers of using such strings.

Authorities said the sale, production and storage of nylon, plastic or any other glass or metal-coated manja would be prohibited in the capital city and those who violated the ban would have to pay a penalty of 100,000 rupees (\$1,495; £1,148) and could be jailed for up to five years.

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This Knighted King Penguin Has Just Been Made A Brigadier

huffingtonpost.com

His first call of duty was inspecting Norway's royal troops.

08/23/2016 11:38 am ET | **Updated** 1 day ago

Norway's royal guard is now officially overseen by the world's most decorated penguin — at least when they're visiting his zoo.

Sir Nils Olav, a king penguin at Scotland's Edinburgh Zoo, was made an honorary member of the King of Norway's Guard on Monday after being promoted to Brigadier, the zoo announced.

The adorable penguin, whose original flock was gifted to the zoo by Norway in 1914, strutted down a line of more than 50 uniformed soldiers during his first formal inspecting of the guards. He additionally showed off his new rank insignia, which he wore on his upper right flipper.



"We are honored to host His Majesty the King of Norway's Guard as they bestow a prestigious new title upon our king penguin, Sir Nils Olav," Barbara Smith, acting CEO for the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, said in a release. "It is a very proud moment and represents the close collaboration between our two countries, Scotland and Norway."

The ceremony may sound unusual, but Sir Olav's recognition is one that goes back several decades, thanks to both countries' warm ties, according to the zoo.



In 1972, a king penguin at the zoo was formally named after Maj. Nils Egelien, who organized the penguin's adoption, and the then-King of Norway, King Olav.

Because that apparently wasn't enough, the bird was then named mascot of His Majesty the King of Norway's Guard before being promoted to corporal in 1982.

In 1987 the regal penguin was again promoted to sergeant, then regimental sergeant major in 1993, followed by honorable regimental sergeant major in 2001, colonel-in-chief in 2005, a knighthood in 2008, and this week brigadier.

Monday's ceremony was made possible as the Norwegian King's Guard is in Edinburgh this week to perform in the Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Brig. David Allfrey, who is the producer and chief executive of The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, warmly applauded the unique tradition.

"This is just a simply fantastic example of the great relations between our two countries, and it couldn't be a more charming tradition," he said in a release. "At the Tattoo we of course have many





inspecting officers but this is by far my favorite. Congratulations, Brigadier Olav."

Want to see more? Check out video of Monday's waddle-riffic ceremony here.

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Part of HuffPost • HPMG News

Australian woman catches home-intruding koala attempting to pole dance

upi.com

By Ben Hooper | July 18, 2016 at 1:39 PM Follow @oddnewsupi

WOOLGOOLGA, Australia, July 18 (UPI) -- An Australian woman who came home to find a koala had broken into her house captured video of the adorable intruder trying its hand at pole dancing.

Nikki Erickson of Woolgoolga, New South Wales, said in a Facebook post she came home from work one afternoon to find the koala trying to climb her pole dancing equipment like a tree.

Advertisement

"It was pretty shocking walking into my house and seeing this beautiful creature," Erickson wrote. "It got in through an open [door] we leave open for nitro to get to his bed. Apparently it's breeding season for them but not very common for them to wander into a house."

Erickson said she called a koala rescue service to return the marsupial to its natural habitat.

The koala encounter took place in August of last year, but Erickson just recently posted a Facebook video of the animal attempting to climb her pole dancing equipment.

"I've named her Larrisa the pole dancing koala bear," Erickson wrote.

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Fairf

Zeal

Fun game, strange name

Stuff Sak Stuff Kumeu pickleball - the fun game with a strange name $\mathop{\otimes}_{201\ell}^{\text{OLG}}$ KIM ACE

New Last updated 16:59, July 26 2016



OLGA SAKEY Members of the Rotorua Pickleball Club show Kumeu players how it's done.

Have you heard of pickleball? The fun game with the strange name was launched in New Zealand a year ago and has now come to the Kumeu Racquets Club.

Promoter Olga Sakey says pickleball is easy to learn and can be played competitively by anyone of any age or ability.

Halfway between tennis and table tennis, she says it is often described as ping pong on steroids.

Underhand serves and a non-volley zone close to the net make it easy

and non-threatening for new players, whilst the strategy and often fast-paced endgame allows the more advanced to test their mettle.

It is played indoors or outdoors on a badminton court, with the net lowered to about 5cm less than a tennis net.

The paddles used are lightweight and the plastic "wiffle" balls with with holes in them and the Kumeu club provides all equipment for people to use.

Sakey says the game is renowned overseas for being very social, with the short games most often played as doubles.

It is a "great way to meet people, and also highly addictive," she says.

The Kumeu Racquets Club are hosting the first official pickleball club in Auckland, and are holding a free introduction and how-to- play workshop next Thursday at 7pm.

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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Last Journalists Exit the Birthplace of Modern News

smithsonianmag.com



July/August 2016 magazine cover

After 300 years, Fleet Street, the London thoroughfare home to dozens of newspapers and thousands of reporters, becomes a tourist stop



src="http://thumbs.media.smithsonianmag.com/filer/f6/0e/f60e 3fba-4aef-9f95-02e8535bb6b7/1280px-londres_-_fleet_street.jpg__800x600_q85_crop.jpg" alt="Fleet Street" itemprop="image">

Image of Fleet Street taken in 2005 (Wikimedia Commons) By Jason Daley smithsonian.com August 8. 2016

Anyone who picks up a morning paper, browses a news website or shakes their fist at cable news has one place to thank or blame: Fleet Street. The London thoroughfare has been the spiritual home of journalism since 1702

when the first London daily newspaper was printed there. By 1730, Matthew Green at *The Telegraph* reports the city had six daily papers, 12 tri-weeklies, and 13 weekly papers, most of them written and printed at offices on Fleet Street. But now, after three centuries, the last two ink-stained wretches left on Fleet Street have pulled up stakes.

Last Friday, reporters Gavin Sherriff and Darryl Smith of Dundee, Scotland's *Sunday Post* were officially laid off. Their departures officially signaled the end of the run for journalism on the road linking Buckingham Palace to the City of London, reports Mario Cacciottolo at the BBC.

It's a symbolic moment, but not news to those paying attention, as the street has been on a decline for several decades.

Journalists chose to colonize the street for several reasons, explains Green. It was already the home of book printing and book selling in London when the newspapers came to prominence, so it was a natural choice. As a main thoroughfare through the city, it was also a great place to find out the latest news from arriving travelers. A large number of pubs and mix of highbrow and lowbrow establishments meant it was a ideal for meeting sources, overhearing conversations and arguing about the day's issues. European visitors to London in the 1700s were shocked by the inhabitants' obsession with the news, with everyone from gentleman to illiterate workers either reading the paper or squeezing into pubs to hear someone read from the latest edition.

That obsession never died down. Papers chose to stay on Fleet Street and the surrounding area, and as journalism grew in sophistication, the papers built larger offices and printed their papers there. During World War II and the decades following, Fleet Street reached the peak of its prestige and influence. "At its height, Fleet Street was very, very important because television was in its early childhood, and there was no social media," Robin Esser, who worked as a journalist on Fleet Street



James Valentine captured this shot of Fleet Street in 1890. (Public Domain)

for 60 years, at one time serving as executive managing editor for *The Daily Mail* tells Cacciottolo. She estimates that 85 percent of information being made available to the public was delivered through the newspapers.

In the 1980s, many of the papers in the area were still using "hot metal" printing presses, which Jon Henley at *The Guardian* reports took up to 18 men to run. When media mogul Rupert Murdoch began buying up British papers, he wanted to get rid of the outdated equipment and replace it with more modern, less labor-intensive printing methods used in the U.S. and Australia. In 1986, Murdoch

planned to uproot several of his newspapers and move them to a new, centralized complex in the area of Wapping. That precipitated a year-long event called the Wapping Dispute. Murdoch laid off 6,000 union printers, who picketed for almost a year before giving up. The move broke the back of the printer's union and other newspapers based on Fleet Street soon began moving to more modern complexes in other parts of the city as well.

Today, Fleet Street is now full of sandwich shops, lawyers and banks, Conor Sullivan at *The Financial Times* reports. Most of the famous pubs, like the *The Ye Old Cheshire Cheese* and *Punch* tavern, once watering holes for hard-drinking journos, are now tourist traps or cater to the office lunch crowd.

It's the end of an era. DC Thomson, the company that owns the *Sunday Post*, will be keeping some advertising staff at the Fleet Street office, but with the editorial presence gone, the street is now simply just another stop on the London history tour.

Read more from this author | Follow @jasondaley608



- 19 September 2010
- From the section Shropshire

http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-shropshire-11360659



The Reverend Norman Morris led the service for Richard Munslow

The restored grave of the last known "sin-eater" in England has been at the centre of a special service in a Shropshire village churchyard.

Campaigners raised £1,000 to restore the grave of Richard Munslow, who was buried in Ratlinghope in 1906.

Sin-eaters were generally poor people paid to eat bread and drink beer or wine over a corpse, in the belief they would take on the sins of the deceased.

Frowned upon by the church, the custom mainly died out in the 19th Century.

It was prevalent in the Marches, the land around the England-Wales border, and in north Wales, but was rarely carried out anywhere else.

Believers thought the sin-eater taking on the sins of a person who died suddenly without confessing their sins would allow the deceased's soul to go to heaven in peace.

While most of the sin-eaters were poor people or beggars, Mr Munslow was a well-established farmer in the area.

This grave at Ratlinghope is now in an excellent state of repair but I have no desire to reinstate the ritual that went with it

The Reverend Norman Morris

The Reverend Norman Morris, the vicar of Ratlinghope, a village of about 100 residents on the Long Mynd near Church Stretton, led the "God's Acre" service at St Margaret's Church.

Mr Morris said: "It was a very odd practice and would not have been approved of by the church but I suspect the vicar often turned a blind eye to the practice."

Locals began the collection to restore the grave, which had fallen into disrepair in recent years, believing it would be good to highlight the custom and Mr Munslow's place in religious history.

It took a few months to raise the £1,000 needed to pay for the work, carried out by local stonemason Charles Shaw.

Mr Morris said: "This grave at Ratlinghope is now in an excellent state of repair but I have no desire to reinstate the ritual that went with it."

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Pope Francis Tightens The Reins On 'Listless' Nuns

07/23/2016 04:52 pm 16:52:23

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Celia Wexler Catholic feminist, journalist, former public interest lobbyist

For some time now, I've been concerned that while Pope Francis was awfully good at improving the tone of the church, he hasn't done much to actually change things. You know, by issuing Papal edicts.

But on July 22, he did issue an "apostolic constitution," a binding document with new rules. And to whom is the document addressed? Contemplative nuns!

These are the sisters we generally don't see. They live in cloistered monasteries, away from daily contact with the world, focused on work and prayer. (We call them monasteries, not convents, because that's the accurate term when referring to the residences of either nuns or priests who lead contemplative lives.)

You would think that the Pope would not have the time to worry about roughly 40,000 nuns whose main occupation is to pray for the rest of us.

After all, there was the mess at the Vatican bank, including continued questions about the bank's possible ties to Nazi collaborators, the ongoing problem of pedophilia scandals in the church, and the efforts by conservative clerics to challenge the Pope's encyclical on marriage and the family.

But no, here's the institutional church meddling with nuns living in small communities all over the world and not making any trouble, at least as far as I know.

In the document, "Seeking the Face of God" on women's contemplative life, the Pope praised these sisters to the sky for their "life of complete self-giving," noting that their contemplative life "produces a rich harvest of grace and mercy."

But then the Vatican went into micro-management mode. The Pope focused on twelve areas of contemplative life, including how the nuns recruit, pray and use the Internet, among other things. The Vatican will be issuing more detailed instructions, and monasteries will have to revise their rules to adapt.

I understand the Pope feels these mandates are important. He writes that contemplatives can succumb to the "subtle temptations" of "listlessness, mere routine, lack of enthusiasm and paralyzing lethargy."

But even if that were true for many sisters, I don't think that listless cloistered nuns are the church's biggest problem these days.

The Pope wants to make sure that the sisters pray, every day, the Divine Office, prayers focused on the Psalms and other readings from the Bible that are recited hourly. (And yes, there now is an app for that.) He wants them to spend more time adoring the Holy Eucharist, which Catholics believe contains the real presence of Christ.

He orders the nuns not to poach new members from other countries, saying it is to be "absolutely avoided." He requires individual monasteries to form federations with other monasteries in order to collaborate with one another.

The Pope doesn't want a bunch of elderly nuns continuing on in a monastery unless it has enough younger members, and also "self-sufficiency and a suitably appointed monastery building." If any of these elements is missing, an "ad hoc commission" may be formed to determine the monastery's fate. The commission, which will include Vatican representatives and other outsiders, will decide whether to pull the plug and merge with another community, or come up with a revitalization plan. That may make sense, but it could be very traumatic for elderly nuns who likely would find it difficult to change.

Contemplatives in the U.S. have been using social media to preach the Gospel to the world while remaining cloistered, and to help their recruitment efforts. While acknowledging that social media "can prove helpful for formation and communication," the Pope wants the nuns to exercise "prudent discernment," so that that social media does not become "occasions for wasting time or escaping from the demands of fraternal life." No more tracking your twitter followers, Sisters!

One hopes that the sisters do not have to cut back on social media efforts like those of the Visitation Monastery of Minneapolis. They call themselves the "Nunz in the hood" and write thoughtful blogs that are far more informed and topical than many sermons I hear.

Interestingly, these directives to not apply to monks. Changes for the men, a Vatican official said, aren't even being - uh - contemplated.

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Friendly lion cub found wandering streets of Russian city

upi.com



By Ben Hooper | Sept. 9, 2016 at 9:27 AM



A lion cub is captured on the streets of Ufa, Russia. Screenshot: Storyful

UFA, Russia, Sept. 9 (UPI) -- A friendly lion cub found wandering the streets of a Russian city and captured by a passerby turned out to be a young boy's escaped birthday present.

Residents of Ufa reported seeing the small lion wandering the streets recently and a man was able to get

a hold of the animal, which was wearing a collar, and tie it to a fence while awaiting authorities.

The lion appeared friendly toward humans and did not seem bothered by onlookers stopping to take pictures with it.

The cub was taken to Park of Foresters in Ufa until it was claimed by Flur Mullagayanov, whose family lives near Ufa.

Mullagayanov said the lion was a birthday present for his young son, a second-grader, and escaped when he brought the feline to Ufa to visit a veterinarian and get its vaccinations.

He said he did not notice the lion, named Shere Khan, was not in the van until he had already arrived back at home.

The lion was returned to the family unharmed.

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Girl strikes gold by finding stolen Olympic medal in trash

yahoo.com

AP August 29, 2016

 P_{res} ATLANTA (AP) — An Olympic champion is thanking a 7-year-old Atlanta girl who found his gold medal in a pile of trash weeks after it got stolen.

Joe Jacobi won the medal in men's canoe double slalom at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona. Jacobi says it was stolen when somebody broke into his car in June.

Weeks later, Chloe Smith was walking with her father when she spotted the gold medal discarded in a pile of garbage. Chloe returned the medal to Jacobi, who had posted about the theft on social media. The former Olympian then promised to visit Chloe's school and let her classmates know about her good deed.

Jacobi spoke Monday to Chloe's first-grade class at Woodson Park Academy. WSB-TV reports (http://2wsb.tv/2bEaJw3) the Olympian brought his recovered gold medal with him.

Lost in the Great Fire: which London buildings disappeared in the 1666 blaze?

Dr Matthew Green
Tuesday 30 August 2016 theguardian.com

This week 350 years ago, the Great Fire of London burned through 400 of the city's streets. Matthew Green reveals the extraordinary structures lost in the blaze – from old St Paul's to a riverside castle – and what survived, only to vanish later



"Oh the miserable and calamitous spectacle!" wrote John Evelyn in 1666, "mine eyes ... now saw above 10,000 houses all in one flame." The conflagration he witnessed from 2-5 September destroyed much of the medieval metropolis, swallowing 400 streets, 13,200 houses, 87 churches, and 44 livery halls.

Many of the City of London's most iconic buildings were consumed: St Paul's Cathedral, the Royal Exchange, Newgate Prison, Christ's Hospital, even Whittington's Longhouse, one of the biggest public toilets in Europe, in the Vintry. Evelyn was

aghast at the destruction of so much of the medieval centre: "London was, but is no more".

Yet this wasn't exactly true. By the time of the fire, only a quarter of London's population actually lived in the walled city, compared to three-quarters a century earlier. The growing eastern suburbs like Wapping and Stepney were left unscathed – as were much of Holborn, the Temple, western Fleet Street, the Strand, and the emergent squares of the West End.

Nor, as contemporary scorch maps reveal, did the fire even decimate the whole of the walled city: around four-fifths of it was destroyed (an area of 373 acres), leaving the north-eastern and some eastern parts (including the Tower of London) unaffected thanks to the gusty east wind.

It was here, outside the fire's trail of destruction, that many extraordinary buildings survived only to be destroyed later on – whether by demolition works, other fires, or bombs. As we reach the 350th anniversary of the fire, it is fitting to commemorate not just the buildings destroyed in those four hellish days in September, but also some of those that survived, only to vanish later on.

Landmark buildings destroyed in the Great Fire ...



Castle Baynard

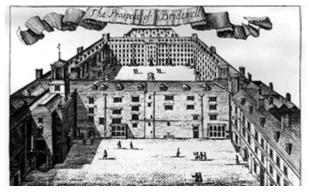
This riverside castle was built in the late 13th century, inheriting the name of a destroyed castle further to the west – the Tower of London's lost twin – that had been built by the Norman Ralph Baynard after the Conquest. Many of Henry VIII's wives lived here and, according to tradition, Richard of Gloucester was offered the crown here in 1483.

After several rebuilds, it appeared on the eve of the fire as a big, brooding stone structure with gabled projecting towers soaring from the Thames, a dock, thick curtain walls, central

courtyard, and meaty turrets. The scene of lavish banquets and coronations, the castle was destroyed save for one round tower, later converted into a house, now vanished. Today, part of the site is occupied by a brutalist office block and commemorated by a blue plague on Castle Baynard Street, just south of St Paul's Cathedral.

Bridewell Palace

Built in 1515-20 on the western bank of the River Fleet near Blackfriars, this lost inner-city palace was one of Henry VIII's favourites. It was a large, rambling brick structure set around three courtyards with gardens and a



private wharf. An imposing feature of the riverfront, it was probably the scene of Catherine of Aragon's final meeting with the king in 1529 (over a quarrelsome dinner).

Under Henry's son Edward VI, it became a poorhouse but was decimated on the third day of the Great Fire. The Fleet, contrary to expectations, proved no firebreak at all even though attempts were made to pull down the riverside houses. Something of the palace's stateliness lives on in the Ionic columns of Unilever House, the art deco building that occupies the site today.



The Great Conduit

Advantageously located next to St Paul's Cathedral and considerably grander and more spacious than the rest of the City's labyrinthine streets, Cheapside – from the old English *chepe* (market) – was the undisputed high street of London before the fire. One of its most distinctive features, at the eastern end of the street, was the Great Conduit fountain, pictured here to the right of the Cheapside Cross.

From the 1230s to 1666, the Great Conduit channelled free water from the River Tyburn to Cheapside in lead pipes via the

Strand and Fleet Street. Illegal siphoning was rife, reducing the water pressure – in Henry VI Part II, Shakespeare describes it as a "pissing-conduit" – and on the occasion of military victories, royal births and coronations, it sometimes ran with wine. As the fire spread, people dug desperately into the earth to puncture the conduit's water supply, hoping the water might quench the flames – in vain – and the Great Conduit itself was razed to the ground along with Cheapside on Tuesday 4 September.



Gothic St Paul's

Old St Paul's was the wonder of medieval London. It was the fourth cathedral to stand on the site, built from Caen stone after the Norman Conquest, and finished in 1314. It was its monumental timber-and-lead spire that visitors noticed first (until it was struck by lightning in 1561), rising to 489 feet. Not until the BT Tower was built in 1964 would another building soar so high in London.

The remorselessly gothic exterior was much sterner than Christopher Wren's neoclassical successor, with flying

buttresses, pointed windows, and sharp turrets. As one of the biggest covered public spaces in London, a bazaar-like atmosphere prevailed inside, with lawyers tossing coins in the baptismal font, farmers' wives selling fruit and ale, and apprentices shooting arrows at the jackdaws and pigeons in the rafters, smashing the holy windows. Riding high in the eastern wall was the famous rose window, bathing the high altar in kaleidoscopic light.

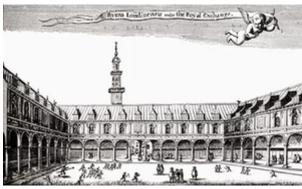
When St Paul's burned down on the third day of the fire, a local thunderstorm broke out with forks of apocalyptic lightning radiating from the blazing building. Eventually, the roof melted, sending streams of molten lead pouring down Ludgate Hill "glowing with fiery redness" as people ran for their lives.

The Steelyard

"Foreigners are ill-regarded, not to say detested in London," observed a Venetian visitor to the capital in 1617 – one reason, no doubt, the 400 German merchants of the Hanseatic League (an economic alliance of German cities) lived a sequestered life in the Steelyard. This motley collection of wharves, storehouses, a tavern, guildhall, mint, chapel, and lodgings – all engirdled by a stone wall – amounted to a mini city-within-a-city.



Since the early 13th century, successive kings allowed the foreign merchants to trade freely in England, immune from rent and taxation in exchange for surrendering their vessels in wartime. Their complex was razed to the ground in 1666, by which point they had lost most of their privileges after the jealous city guilds expressed anger regarding them towards Queen Elizabeth I. Today, its memory is effaced by Cannon Street Station.



The Royal Exchange

This vast, open-air trading piazza was the brainchild of the merchant Thomas Gresham.

Christened the Royal Exchange by Queen Elizabeth I in 1571, it became the epicentre of England's burgeoning trading empire, emitting onto Cornhill "an incessant buzz, like the murmurs of a distant ocean". Along its colonnaded walks and finely pebbled courtyard, merchants from all over the world, customers and suppliers would meet twice a day to seal deals that would send ships to the four corners of the world.

It was a broad, four-storey building with fine shops in its upper galleries, and a bell tower surmounted by a large grasshopper, the emblem of the Gresham family. Watching from niches above the colonnade were statues of all the English kings and queens since William the Conqueror.

The Great Fire swept through the Exchange on 3 September, filling the courtyard with "sheets of fire" and sending the kings and queens plummeting from their niches, smashing to pieces below. As a totem of England's commercial prowess, the Exchange was swiftly rebuilt after the fire, opening in 1669. But this, too, was destroyed by fire in 1838, and the site is currently occupied by a third exchange.

... and classic buildings that survived, only to be destroyed later



Nonsuch House

This wildly eccentric, gaudily painted, meticulously carved Renaissance palace was the jewel in the crown of London Bridge. Made entirely from wood it was prefabricated in Holland and erected in 1577-79, replacing the medieval drawbridge gate. At four storeys it was the biggest building on the bridge, straddling the whole street and lurching over the Thames, affording its illustrious occupants spectacular views of the metropolis. Its tulip-bulb cupolas were admired from miles around and there was truly nonsuch like this architectural

mongrel anywhere else in London.

The fire only consumed a modern block of houses at the northern end of London Bridge, separated from the rest by a gap, and so Nonsuch House, built on the 7th and 8th arches from the Southwark end, happily survived – only to be dismantled with the rest of the houses a hundred years later.

The White Hart pub

This old inn is a sad – and relatively recent – loss. Originally a 14th-century tavern harangued by the cries of the insane from the hospital of Bethlem next door, it was rebuilt in 1480 as one of Bishopsgate's galleried coaching inns catering for a transient population of travellers, traders, actors, prostitutes and pilgrims. It had bulging bay windows, a profusion of tiny window panes, and central archway leading into the courtyard with "1480" proudly



inscribed above.

Escaping the fire, it was completely rebuilt in a mellower Georgian style in 1829, all stucco and sash windows, only to be demolished in recent years to make way for a brash, ninestorey cylindrical block of offices and shops, set to open in December 2016. Rather absurdly, the old pub's facade will be preserved and grafted onto the new building, rubbing Londoners' faces in their loss.



Northumberland House

Built in 1605, this lion-topped Jacobean palace was once an imposing feature of Charing Cross, by the equestrian statues of Charles I from 1675. It belonged to the illustrious earls and dukes of Northumberland, perfectly located to attend court and parliament. It was originally one of a parade of gilded medieval and Tudor riverside palaces, of which only Somerset House survives today, albeit rebuilt, but giving a sense of their former grandeur. The westernmost point of the fire's trail of destruction was Fetter Lane, saving Northumberland House – but, shamefully, it was demolished in 1874 after the Metropolitan Board of Works paid its final duke a small fortune to move out so they could build Northumberland Avenue.



Paul Pindar's House

Around 1600, the wealthy merchant and diplomat Paul Pindar returned from Italy and built "a very commodious mansion" on Bishopsgate Street Without, a pleasant stretch just beyond the City walls. It had a richly carved oak facade, with gradually protruding bays meeting in a turret-like shape at the front, and tiny panes of glass with fine patterning. Lying in the north-east corner of the City, it emerged unscathed in the fire and, subdivided, part of it became a tavern in the 18th century, the Sir Paul Pindar's Head. It fell victim to the expansion of the Great

Eastern Railway in 1890 – but part of the façade is preserved today in all its meticulously-carved glory in the V&A Museum.



The crooked townhouse on Fleet Street

On the north side of Fleet Street, the fire didn't manage to vault Fetter Lane. If it had, then this wonderfully overwrought fourstorey townhouse bulging over the corner of Chancery Lane and Fleet Street, depicted by the antiquarian engraver John Thomas Smith in 1789, would almost certainly have been lost. "Antiquity Smith" had a keen eye for the vanishing city – the house was removed 10 years later. Today a tasteful, but less characterful, auburn Victorian building occupies the site.

The Cock and Magpie Tavern



One of a cluster of old houses in Drury Lane – which was far west enough not to be threatened by the fire – this beguiling gabled building wasn't destroyed until 1882. For most of its life, it housed the Cock and Magpie pub which, according to the Society for Photographing Relics of Old London in 1880, was nearly 400 years old (though this is questionable). In its twilight years, it became a bookshop.



The Savoy hospital

From 1512, this was a grand hospital within the stout, battlemented walls of the ruined Savoy Palace,

magnificently built by Peter of Savoy but burned down in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. At sunset each night, poor pilgrims, strangers and children would stream in to pray, wash, sleep and perhaps consult a physician or surgeon. An initiative of Henry VII, the hospital was re-founded by Mary I, and enlarged by Queen Elizabeth I.

It survived the Great Fire, but had ceased to be an operative paupers' hospital by that stage (serving mainly as a military barracks), and was in ruins by 1800 following a fire. The site was cleared in 1816-20 and, since the 1880s, has been a theatre and uber-exclusive hotel, retaining something of the Savoy Palace's earlier hauteur. Today, only the hospital's stone chapel survives, adrift in a sea of office blocks.

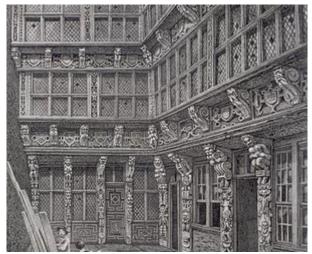


14/15 Nevill's Court, Fetter Lane, London

captured old buildings on the brink of oblivion.

Pre-fire houses in Nevill's Court

Nevill's Court was a narrow alley off the east side of Fetter Lane, named after Ralph Neville, the Bishop of Chichester who had a London mansion here in the 1220s. The court once contained one of London's best-kept secrets: a cluster of houses with picturesque overhanging storeys and plastered walls, replete with small, fenced-off gardens. These houses escaped the fire by the skin of their teeth – but were then destroyed in the early 20th century. Photographs survive thanks to the London Topographical Society who, spurred on by the "practical rebuilding" of London from the mid-Victorian period,



The glass and gargoyle mansion

Fashionable glazed windows were something of a luxury in Elizabethan London, and at a time when so many dwellings had only a cloth or greased paper behind a lattice to let light in, this timber-framed mansion in Crutched Friars, to the north of the Tower of London was a work of almost criminal ostentation. It was made almost entirely from glass, with the load-bearing beams adorned with particularly hideous gargoyles as a foil to the beauty of the glass. Just three streets separated it from the limits of Fire's trail of destruction to the east. It was dismantled at the end of the 18th century, having become an antiquated curiosity.

Shaftesbury House



Constructed to the designs of Inigo Jones in the 1640s, Shaftesbury House on Aldersgate Street was "built in brick, and ornamented with stone in a most noble and elegant manner." Its eight Ionic pilasters and very large windows added gravitas, making it a fitting residence for the Earl of Shaftesbury, who lends the building its name.

In later years it was a tavern, lying-in hospital, general dispensary, and finally shops. It owed its Great Fire survival to the city walls at Aldersgate – but it was unceremoniously ripped down in 1882. Now a barren, unlovely stretch pounded by

traffic, 17th-century Aldersgate was once reckoned the most Italianate street in London, with harmonious buildings and a graceful width.

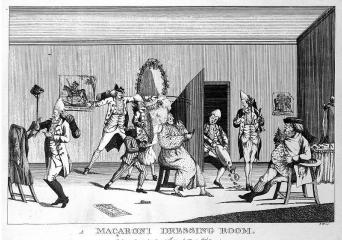
Dr Matthew Green is the author of London: A Travel Guide Through Time. He lectures on the history of London and leads tours through the city

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Mini book a30976e9da7a2492

Meet the stylish gender-role rebels of 1770s England.

by Michael Waters August 24, 2016



An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Revolutionary War—might well Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003) A caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003)

Generations of American kids forced to sing "Yankee Doodle" have grown up justifiably puzzled by its lyrics.

Though the song, set to an upbeat melody, appears to satirize Americans, it is today treated as a patriotic anthem. Anyone who is not given proper context—that "Yankee Doodle" was originally created by the British to ridicule Americans, and that American soldiers reclaimed it during the question the point of the song.

But perhaps the most confounding part of "Yankee Doodle" is its opening. To the average listener, the first verse appears to describe an American man who confuses a feather for a piece of pasta:

Yankee Doodle went to town A-riding on a pony, Stuck a feather in his cap

And called it macaroni.

The "macaroni" in question does not, however, refer to the food, but rather to a fashion trend that began in the 1760s among aristocratic British men.

On returning from a Grand Tour (a then-standard trip across Continental Europe intended to deepen cultural knowledge), these young men brought to England a stylish sense of fashion consisting of large wigs and slim clothing as well as a penchant for the then-little-known Italian dish for which they were named. In England at large, the word "macaroni" took on a larger significance. To be "macaroni" was to be sophisticated, upper class, and worldly.

In "Yankee Doodle," then, the British were mocking what they perceived as the Americans' lack of class. The first verse is satirical because a doodle—a simpleton—thinks that he can be macaroni fashionable—simply by sticking a feather in his cap. In other words, he is out of touch with high society.



An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003) A of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003)

But what is fascinating about those fashionable British macaronis is how quickly they fell out of favor—and how, within a decade, a word that once denoted worldliness became synonymous with excess and male femininity.

It helps to think of the macaronis in waves. The first wave—those aristocrats returning from the Grand Tour in the 1760s—made macaroni fashion emblematic of social status. While their rather large wigs and slim clothes were seen as a bit feminine, they remained well within the bounds of acceptability, and actually became quite trendy.

But in the 1770s, as macaroni fashion spread beyond its aristocratic roots, these traces of femininity were amplified many times over. Thus came the second wave, when macaroni men were defined by their effeminacy.

their wigs and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0)

Two macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his sprung up in order to deride these macaroni men.

The new macaronis were characterized in a relatively singular way: most were gaunt men with tight pants, short coats, gaudy shoes, striped stockings, fancy walking sticks, and—most recognizably—extravagant wigs. Humorous depictions showed macaroni men wearing giant wigs topped of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003)

pigtails. Often these wigs were heavily powdered and were nearly half the size of the macaronis themselves. One representative comic showed a macaroni with hair so long that he needed a servant to carry it around for him.



An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) An

In England at the time, masculinity was about moderation: masculine men were polished but not extravagant, and their wigs were sober. Women, in contrast, did not wear wigs, but they padded their coiffures with so much decoration that their hair became famous for its height. (According to "Hair, Authenticity, and the Self-Made Macaroni," a popular joke at the time "held that because their hair was so tall, ladies were forced to sit on the floors of their carriages in order to fit inside.")

That macaronis emulated many facets of female dress did not escape the notice of English commentators, who variously referred to macaronis as "that doubtful gender," "hermaphrodites," and "amphibious creatures."

One song described a macaroni as thus: "His taper waist, so strait and long, / His spindle shanks, like pitchfork prong, / To what sex does the thing belong? / 'Tis call'd a Macaroni."

engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003) A caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003)

The Oxford Magazine similarly described the macaroni as not belonging to the gender binary: "There is indeed a kind of animal, neither male, nor female, a thing of neuter gender, lately started up among us. It is called a Macaroni. It talks without meaning, it smiles without pleasure, it eats without appetite, it rides without exercise, it wenches without passion."



PANTHEON MACARONI

An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two

macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind London/CC BY 4.0) Two macaroni doctors, with their wigs and canes propped up behind London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe.

(Photo: Public Domain) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of

Congress/LC-USZ62-115003)

Whether these critiques of macaronis insinuated homosexuality is debated. Certainly it is difficult to generalize one way or other: though some commentators appeared to frame macaronis in terms of same-sex attraction, not all did. Regardless, macaronis became a fixture of popular imagination for their rejection of traditional gender roles. Rumors circulated that macaronis drank only milk, avoided eating roast beef at all costs, and disdained popular gathering places like bars and coffeehouses. According to "The Darly Macaroni Prints and the Politics of 'Private Man,'" they were also frequently compared to devils, reptiles, monkeys, and butterflies.

In fact, the public shaming of macaronis grew so commonplace that it became an industry: in the early 1770s, Mary Darly, a cartoonist by them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, trade, devoted so much energy to caricaturing macaronis that her store in London became known as "The Macaroni Print Shop." Darly's them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, ridicule of macaronis became the first widespread use of the caricature as a means of social commentary.

> In one caricature, entitled "What, is this my son Tom?," a farmer pokes at his son's wig with a whip, unable to believe that his son has taken on such an effeminate dress. The son, meanwhile, is presented as ridiculous: his hair and pigtails are gigantic, his cane is inexplicably tousled, and he carries around a decorative sword.

The cartoon's description captures the Congress/LC-USZ62-115003) A remorse of an older generation convinced that its youth were wrecking the culture:

The honest Farmer, come to Town,

Can scarce believe his Son his own If thus the Taste continues Here,



An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) An engraving of a "macaroni's dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two and canes propped up behind them. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A macaroni doffs his hat in the street as behind him, his hairdresser supports the weight of his wig. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A 1773 illustration by Philip Dawe. (Photo: Public Domain) A caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003) A

caricature of the macaroni fashion. (Photo: Library of Congress/LC-USZ62-115003)

What will it be another Year?

In the 1770s, satirical prints like these proliferated, and they came to define macaronis in the public consciousness. Today, it is difficult to separate these caricatures from the actual macaronis. It is even likely that portrayals of macaronis were highly exaggerated; by some accounts, macaroni dress in the 1770s did not in fact stray too far from the norm.

And though humor was a primary driver of these caricatures, some scholars—like Amelia Rauser—argue there is also another motive: cartoonists, like the public at large, were attracted to the striking singularity of the macaronis. Macaronis were certainly odd, but they were also brave. In a society that emphasized individuality, it is not hard to imagine that they became folk heroes of a kind—and that many of the people who laughed at them felt a tug of longing for the freedom with which they lived.

dressing room," from 1772. (Photo: Wellcome Images, London/CC BY 4.0) Two legacy of these early gender-role rebels was preserved almost entirely through caricatures. Well, and through that peculiar song, where a man canes propped up behind confuses a feather for macaroni.

macaroni doctors, with their wigs © 2016 Atlas Obscura. All rights reserved.

^{/*} Copyright 2014 Evernote Corporation. All rights reserved. */.en-markup-crop-options { top: 18px !important; left: 50% !important; margin-left: -100px !important; width: 200px !important; border: 2px rgba(255,255,255,38) solid !important; border-radius: 4px !important; } .en-markup-crop-options div div:first-of-type { margin-left: 0px !important; }

Man 'decapitated after sticking head out of train window'

Jen Mills for Metro.co.ukSunday 7 Aug 2016 8:51 pm



Man 'decapitated after sticking head out of train window'

direction is believed to have struck him.

It happened this afternoon (Twitter/Lucie Walker)

A passenger has reportedly been decapitated after he stuck his head out of a moving train.

The man, aged in his twenties, was travelling on the Gatwick Express this afternoon and died instantly during the incident at Wandsworth Common station just after 5.30pm.

Another train coming in the opposite



BEST QUALITY AVAILABLE Handout photo taken with permission from the Twitter feed of prepared for the coroner.' @Lucie Walker of emergency services at Wandsworth Common station after a man has died after leaning out of a train window and

being hit by another train. PRESS man died. ASSOCIATION Photo. Picture date: Sunday August 7, 2016. The Gatwick Express passenger was pronounced dead at the scene after the incident at Wandsworth Common station. A spokeswoman for London Ambulance Service said: "We were called at 5.34pm to reports of an incident at Wandsworth Common railway station. See PA story DEATH Train. Photo credit should read: @Lucie Walker/PA Wire NOTE TO EDITORS: This handout photo

may only be used in for editorial

(Picture: PA)

A London Ambulance Service spokesperson said: 'We were called to reports of a man hit by a train with severe head injuries.

'Sadly he was pronounced dead at the scene by doctors.'

The train had been on its way to Victoria station in London.

A British Transport Police spokesman said: 'We were called to Wandsworth Common railway station on Sunday at 5.32pm.

'A man was pronounced dead at the scene.

'The incident is being treated as non-suspicious and a file will be

Reports on social media suggested the man had been 'beheaded' in the accident, however emergency services did not confirm exactly how the

(Picture: PA)

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Back to top

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A police cordon outside Wandsworth Common station, after a man has died after leaning out of a train window and being hit by another train. PRESS ASSOCIATION Photo. Picture date: Sunday August 7, 2016. The Gatwick Express passenger was pronounced dead at the scene after the incident at Wandsworth Common station. A spokeswoman for London Ambulance Service said: "We were called at 5.34pm to reports of an incident at Wandsworth Common railway station. See PA story DEATH Train. Photo credit should read: David Mirzoeff/PA Wire

Man Of Steel: Doctors Remove 40 Knives From Man's Stomach

huffingtonpost.com

"I just enjoyed its taste and I was addicted," the knife-swallower said.

08/22/2016 12:03 pm ET

Nina GolgowskiTrends reporter, The Huffington Post

A man is recovering in northern India after doctors reportedly removed 40 folding knives from his stomach.

The 42-year-old underwent a delicate, five-hour surgery in Amritsar, Punjab, on Friday after complaining of piercing stomach pain, CNN reported.

Doctors took a CT scan, and what they found shocked them.

"In my 20 years of practice, I have never seen anything like it," Dr. Jatinder Malhotra, who led the surgery, told CNN. "He had a wild urge to consume metal. Even for us, the experienced surgeons, it was frightening."



A doctor holds up four knives that are said to have been removed from a man's stomach in northern India. A tabletop is seen covered in blades after the man's five-hour surgery on Friday.

When confronted by doctors, the man, identified by the Times of India as a police head constable, admitted to his quilty pleasure.

"I don't know why I used to swallow knives," he told CNN. "I just enjoyed its taste and I was addicted."

Doctors spent about two days carefully planning the operation, so as not to harm the patient. Once they were finished, they displayed a tabletop full of blades. Some were open, and others were closed. Some were even rusted and broken, Malhotra said.

The man has since vowed not to continue his secret sideshow meal.



A doctor holds up four knives that are said to have been removed from a man's stomach in northern India. A tabletop is seen covered in blades after the man's five-hour surgery on Friday.

Once he is healed, he will receive psychiatric care as well.

Though it's not clear what condition he may have, others who have felt the urge to eat non-food items are said to suffer from an eating disorder called pica, according to the U.S. National Library of Medicine.

Such people have been featured in TLC's popular show "My Strange Addiction." The series has included people eating glass, household cleaners and toilet paper.

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Chinese dad builds 13-foot-tall working mecha robot for son

upi.com

By Ben Hooper | Sept. 7, 2016 at 2:57 PM



A Chinese dad built a 13-foot-tall mecha robot for his son. Screenshot: Newsflare

SHAOXING, China, Sept. 7 (UPI) -- A Chinese dad who runs a factory used his resources and nearly \$70,000 to build a 13-foot-tall working mecha robot suit for his son.

Yin Huajun said he used his factory machinery and about \$70,000 to build the giant yellow robot, which travels on wheels and features moving arms, for his teenage son.

The video shows Yin and his son taking the robot for test drives Thursday in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province.

The mecha robot is impressive, but appears to fall short of the offensive capabilities of giant mecha bots built by U.S. and Japanese teams for a showdown proposed last summer.

Man steals tattoo by running from store before ink has dried

metro.co.uk

This site uses cookies. By continuing, your consent is assumed. Learn more Harry Readhead for Metro.co.ukWednesday 10 Aug 2016 10:45 am

The man ran out of Gary's Tattooing in Hull (Picture: Caters)

Man steals tattoo by running from store before ink has dried

A man stole a tattoo by fleeing the parlour before the ink had even dried.

Artist Gary Norman had barely finished the tattoo of a praying angel on his client's calf when the man got to his feet and ran from the store without paying the £60 he owed.

Security footage caught the thief fleeing Gary's Tattooing in Hull, East Yorkshire on 2.30pm on Friday, July 22. The man spoke with an Eastern European accent, and had earlier paid for a different tattoo at the same shop in Beverley Road.

'He came in and asked me to go over a scar on his hand but I told him I couldn't and so he asked me to cover up a tattoo on one of his legs – which he then paid me for,' Mr Norman said.



Pictured: The rogue that stole a tattoo

The man had agreed to pay £60 for the tattoo (Picture: Caters)



Pictured: The rogue that stole a tattoo

Gary's Tattooing Parlour (Picture: Google)

'He came back in for a tattoo of a praying angel next to a gravestone on his leg and when he got up and said he would pay – but then he just ran off.'

Gary reported the incident to Humberside police. The suspect is described as white, of slim build, around 5ft 10in tall, with short, dark brown hair. He was wearing a blue and white striped T-shirt, blue shorts and black trainers at the time of the theft.

Gary said: 'I didn't want to leave another customer who I didn't know in the shop on their own because obviously I have valuable equipment in there.

'I thought I could get myself into some trouble if I followed him back to the flats where I think he lives, so I was better off calling the police.'

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No Women Wanted to Be Queen so He Took the Job

nbcnews.com

Aug 13 2016, 4:17 am ET

by Andy Eckardt

MAINZ, Germany — For more than a century, grape-growing villages in southern Germany have bestowed the title of "wine queen" on local women who are chosen to serve as ambassadors for the area's produce.



Image: Sven Finke

Sven Finke, Sven Finke

But what happens when no one in town wants to wear the traditional dirndl and crown at local wine festivals?

The Moselle River town of Kesten — with its 350 inhabitants — decided to swap in a laurel wreath and Roman dress after electing Sven Finke to the role.

"After the present wine queen already added a third year to her duties because they could not find a successor, I jokingly said that I would take the wine queen job," the 24-year-old law student told NBC

News.

Little did he know that locals would take his offer seriously and that he would find himself in class with female wine experts during this summer's wine queen seminars.

Finke was officially crowned as "Bacchus Castanidi" on Friday night, a name that relates to the god of winemaking, harvest, ritual madness and ecstasy in Roman mythology.

He is "the first male representative in this part of the Moselle region" — and is tasked with representing the "conservative" town which is home to 25 wineries, Finke said.

Finke's role follows the nomination of a transsexual woman in 2013 and the crowning of a Syrian refugee, who became the city of Trier's wine queen earlier this month.

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California man credits Virgin Mary with \$1.2M lottery win

upi.com

By Ben Hooper | Sept. 7, 2016 at 1:41 PM

SAN JOSE, Calif., Sept. 7 (UPI) -- An 86-year-old California man said the Virgin Mary may have had something to do with his \$696,000 California Lottery jackpot.

Daniel Mendez of San Jose told California Lottery officials he has been watering the flowers his wife planted around the Virgin Mary statue at Our Lady of Refuge Catholic Church "every four or five days" since last year, and he always follows up the tradition by purchasing \$4 worth of lottery scratch-off tickets.

Mendez's routine paid off recently when one of his two Set for Life Scratchers turned out to be a winner for the top prize of \$1.2 million.

Mendez, who opted for the \$696,000 lump sum option, said the Virgin Mary might have had a hand in his win, but he made it a point not to ask her for help in the lottery.

"I don't ask the Virgin to pay me with [lottery] money. I ask that she pays me with taking care of my grandkids," Mendez esaid. "That's more valuable than money to me -- but I really do need a new roof on my house!"

Mendez said he also hopes to spend some of his windfall on landscaping for the church.

Lottery officials said the San Jose CVS Pharmacy location where Mendez bought his ticket was awarded a \$6,000 commission for the sale.

Police: Man with machete chases clown near Greensboro apartment complex

journalnow.com

By Sarah Newell Williamson sarah.williamson@greensboro.com | Posted 15 hours ago

GREENSBORO — A man who spotted a clown near an apartment complex chased that person with a machete, police said today.

The clown was spotted about 10:05 a.m. at the apartment complex The Park at Oak Ridge, at 5856 Old Oak Ridge Road, said Susan Danielsen, police spokeswoman.

A man called 911 to report the clown, and chased the person into the nearby woods with a machete, Danielsen said. Officers responding to the call could not find the clown.

It's unclear if the clown was male or female, Danielsen said. The clown was wearing a yellow dotted shirt, blue pants and had red curly hair. The apartment complex was notified of the incident, she said.

This is the third reported clown sighting within two days in the Triad. In Winston-Salem, two children reported seeing a clown about 8:30 p.m. Sunday in the 1200 block of E. 29th Street, according to Winston-Salem police. That clown is accused of trying to lure the children into the woods with the promise of candy.

Another caller reported seeing a clown on Hope Street in Winston-Salem about midnight.

It's unclear if the clowns are the same person. In the sighting on East 28th Street, the clown was described as wearing white overalls, white gloves and red shoes with bushy red hair, a white face and red nose. No description was provided for the clown on Hope Street, police said.

-The Winston-Salem Journal contributed to this story.

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Air pressure causes manhole cover to 'float' in Phoenix road

upi.com



By Ben Hooper | Aug. 5, 2016 at 1:24 PM Follow @oddnewsupi



A manhole in Phoenix bounces around due to air pressure from a storm. Screenshot: Jessie Pena/Facebook

PHOENIX, Aug. 5 (UPI) -- A
Phoenix resident captured video of
a 15-pound manhole cover
"floating" in a dance-like rhythm due
to underground air pressure from a
storm.

Jessie Pena posted a video to

Facebook showing the manhole cover in the Coronado Historic District "floating" on the air pressure from a Tuesday evening storm.

Commenters compared the manhole cover's movements to a dance.

Pena said the manhole cover weighs about 150 pounds.

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Dead Men Telling Tales: Maritime Gibbet Lore in Nineteenth-Century Popular Culture - Port Towns and Urban Cultures

port.ac.uk

http://porttowns.port.ac.uk/dead-men-telling-tales/

Port Towns and Urban Cultures By Eilís Phillips on August 11, 2015 in article, notfeature



National Maritime Museum (BBC News London Website).

The practice of gibbeting, also known more specifically as hanging in irons, or hanging in chains, was a particularly macabre punishment for a variety of convicted felons, and yet it is the image of the pirate cadaver swinging eerily in the breeze, which appears to have become most engrained in popular culture since the eighteenth century. The practice was only formerly recognised as one of two mandatory punishments for executed criminals in the 1751-52 "Murder Act".[1] Considering that a great many crimes carried the death penalty at this time, by not allowing the murderer a proper burial the Murder Act enabled a way for the more heinous offences such as murder, piracy and smuggling, to be differentiated from seemingly less grievous crimes.[2] Gibbeting continued throughout the eighteenth century but the practice was finally ended in 1832; gibbet posts, however, remained "a significant part of the English landscape" during the early nineteenth century with the last post being demolished around 1856.[3]

Albert Hartshorne, whose book *Hanging in Chains* stands out as a key contemporary text on Victorian gibbet lore states that the word 'gibbet' was often conflated with 'gallows'.[4] The act of gibbeting itself could imply simply suspending a corpse from a

post, or exhibition of the corpse in a gibbet cage or "suit" which, though extremely expensive and time consuming to make served to increase the horror experienced by the observer.[5] Hartshorne notes that gibbeted bodies displayed in more remote regions were specifically avoided after nightfall; that "belated wayfarers were grieved by the horrid grating sound as the body in the iron frame swung creaking to and fro."[6] Compounded with this horrific sight was the gibbet post itself; sometimes standing as high as thirty feet, the post could be studded with "thousands" of nails to prevent the body being stolen, or coated in lead to prevent its being burned down.[7]

Print culture helped to promote a link between sailors and gibbeting, as authors such as Charles Dickens, Sir Walter Scott and poet William Wordsworth featured wayward seafarers who suffered the gruesome fate of being exhibited in public after execution. Wordsworth's cautionary tale, *Adventures on Salisbury Plain* centres on a sailor who has a chilling encounter with a gibbet only to end up as a grisly occupant of an "iron case" himself, subsequently viewed with horror by others.[8] In Dickens' *The Old Curiosity Shop*, the villainous Quilp's body is washed up by the river "where pirates had swung in chains, through many a wintry night" whilst Scott's novel, *The Pirate* was thought to have been based on the case of John Gow, a Scottish sailor who took to piracy and was executed along with seven of his crew at Execution Dock in 1725.[9] Hartshorne tells how Gow allegedly refused to plead at his trial, but upon realising that he was to be tortured to death if he did not speak up, stated that he: "would not have given so much trouble if he could have been assured of not being hung in chains." Gow, however, was subsequently convicted, "and gibbeted in the chains he so much dreaded."[10]

This fear of gibbeting after death was not only provoked by the shame and stigma attached to being exhibited as a criminal, potentially for years to come, but appears to have been heavily centred on the religious connotations of the condemned not receiving a proper burial. That criminals (and their relatives) should fear that the unburied would be denied resurrection in the afterlife, suggests an adherence to traditional religious values, which ran counter to modern scientific consensus viewing bodies as "merely the shells we cast off at death."[11] The punishment of hanging in chains may have been imbued with particularly ominous symbolic resonations for the religious wishing to avoid damnation due to scriptural passages referencing "angels of destruction" who tormented sinners in hell by hanging them in "chains of fire".[12]

Whilst the vast majority of gibbet occupants appear to have been males, the nineteenth-century illustrator George Cruikshank was appalled to see the gibbeted bodies of two women hanging outside Newgate Prison in 1818.[13] The reluctance to gibbet women perhaps stems from public angst regarding "the post-mortem"

treatment of the executed female body" inflamed by rising social stigmas surrounding women being present in the public sphere in general during the period.[14] The gibbeted bodies of foreigner sailors were a more common sight, however, according to one correspondent to the Leicester Chronicle in 1884, who describes the profusion of gibbeted bodies hanging on the Thames at Blackwall Point, opposite the East and West India Docks. These were "mostly Lascar sailors" gibbeted at that point so that they would be seen by other Lascar sailors passing by in crews on the river.[15] These figures were joined in chains by infamous pirates such as Captain Kidd and James Lowry who were also hung in chains by the Thames after having being executed publicly at Execution Dock in Wapping.[16] One newspaper correspondent noted in 1883 that those gibbeted on the Thames for the crime of piracy were not necessarily sea-going vigilantes, but that the punishment was also extended to those who robbed ships on the river.[17] Taverns within the vicinity apparently had "spy-glasses" attached to their windows for customers to use, and when these were removed, there was an outcry in several papers, complaining that Londoners had been "deprived of their amusements, in not being able to enjoy the view of these pirates."[18] Thus, not everyone recoiled in fear from gibbeted bodies, in fact public hangings and gibbetings, far from striking fear into the hearts of locals appear instead to have attracted crowds. Hartshorne observes that in 1792 "after the English rural fashion" a gingerbread stall was set up to accommodate the hordes wishing to the view freshly gibbeted body of an infamous highwayman in Attercliffe Common.[19]

The location of the gibbet certainly seems to have been an important factor when considering the impact of the spectacle upon passers-by. The placement of gibbets within social liminalities: spots such as rivers, cross-roads, bridges and boundaries made them visible to anyone entering or leaving the vicinity, and served to heighten their message of social excommunication, and the transition state inhabited by criminal transgressors who, suspended above the ground were seemingly caught between heaven and earth.[20] Joris Coolen notes that in the Shetland Islands, visibility from harbours and the sea was an important factor for gibbet placement, presumably as a warning to outsiders of what might happen should they violate local laws.[21]



Image courtesy of the Wellcome Library, London A Man Rides
Past a Gibbet. Lithograph by W. Clerk.

That gibbets were frequently the site of reported hauntings and developed their own brand of gibbet folklore—usually centered around sepulchral voices emanating from the corpse to frighten young men embarking on wagers designed to test their mettle—is perhaps unsurprising given their otherworldly and frightening aspect.[22] The ghosts of these executed criminals seem not to have strayed too far from the site of their gibbets; a newspaper report from 1934 relates the tale of the last man to be gibbeted at Broadbury Castle in Devon for killing three women "for a long time the inhabitants of the district walked in fear of their lives at night near the spot where the gibbet stood—all on accounts of the murderer's ghost".[23] A prime maritime example of this phenomenon is that of James Aitkens' ghost, a man who was

executed in 1777 for attempting to burn down Portsmouth Dockyard.[24] Aitkens, known as "Jack the Painter" was hung in chains after death at the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour and his ghost was thereafter said to pace the harbour at night near Blockhouse Point, the site were his gibbeted body had been displayed until it was removed in the 1820s.[25]

Considering the above, it is evident that gibbets provoked different emotions in different audiences. Accounts of those condemned to be hung in chains suggest that criminals held a particular dread of this punishment, perhaps because they feared forfeiting a chance of a redemptive afterlife by not receiving a proper burial. Contradictory accounts of observers' reactions to gibbeted bodies exist, however, but notable trends are discernible. The freshly executed body appears to have been something of a popular attraction, though the bodies of pirates dangling over the Thames continued to draw spectators even after this event had passed. Presumably, these viewings took place during daylight hours, yet once night fell, especially in more remote locations, gibbets seem to have become taboo sites to be avoided for fear of disturbing their restless spirits. Written musings regarding the history of gibbets appear more frequently in newspapers towards the end of the nineteenth century as by then the threat of gibbeting presumably remained far enough in the past as to not seem too freshly horrific. It is most frequently the gibbets of sailors and notorious pirates that draw the most interest from commentators, both literary and in popular journalism, perhaps alluding to a macabre romanticism for the golden age of piracy, one enjoyed at a safe temporal distance.

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It's only fair to share...

8 Responses to Dead Men Telling Tales: Maritime Gibbet Lore in Nineteenth-Century Popular Culture

1. Jim August 11, 2015 at 10:25 pm #

Great article, Eilís. I did not pick up on the difference between gibbeting and hanging until you mentioned it. I had heard that some bodies were tarred to ensure shelf-life. How early is the practice, do you know? Hanged corpses are mentioned in one of the Grimms' fairy tales. I rewrote it for a collection that is hopefully coming out some time this year

Eilís August 12, 2015 at 12:34 pm #

Thanks for you comments Jim, and really glad you enjoyed the article. It's interesting that you bring up tarring as there seems to be some confusion over why bodies were tarred, but yes, in the sources I've found preservation appears to be a motive. In one source from Notes & Queries a gibbeted body was apparently smeared with tar for sanitary purposes. The author remarks that otherwise, after a week or so, the body would have become an "intolerable nuisance"!

As for dating the practice in Britain, the earliest account I've found appears in an 1884 Leicestershire newspaper article which suggest the practice goes back to the Anglo-Saxon period, but that the practice was known as gibbeting from the thirteenth century onwards. The author cites an example of gibbeting from 1236 recorded by Matthew Paris, in which one man was gibbeted alive, the other dead.

Thanks for mentioning the hanging corpses in Grimms' Fairy Tales, you've reminded me that I am long overdue to re-visit them, I'll keep an eye out for your collection!

2. K.M.Lockwood August 18, 2015 at 4:09 pm

Fascinating if macabre piece.

Am I correct in saying that the touch of a newly executed felon was valued for medical purposes? Similarly, were so-called Hands-of-Glory likely to be made from such dead criminals? Thanks.

Eilís August 22, 2015 at 3:06 pm #

Thanks for reading, and for your comments. Yes the touch of freshly hanged (specifically male) corpses was thought to cure a variety of skin ailments, usually localised swellings such as tumours or goiters, a practice which peaked in the latter half of the eighteenth century. As for the Hand of Glory, it involved cutting off the newly hanged man's hand, drying it, and preserving it. This might then be used alongside a candle made from the fat of a hanged man, with the intention of stunning anyone who saw it, rendering them motionless. The hand had to come from a freshly hanged corpse; executed bodies displayed on/in gibbets were deemed too decayed to retain the magical properties of their souls which the recently executed were still thought to possess briefly after death.

If you want to read more, I'd strongly recommend the following article which I've used as a

reference point, and is available to download for free from Owen Davies' academia.edu profile page:

Owen Davies and Francesca Matteoni, "A Virtue Beyond All Medicine': The Hanged Man's Hand, Gallows Tradition and Healing in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century England."

3. Mayank August 22, 2015 at 1:13 am #

Thanks for the link, never knew this, interesting.

Eilís August 22, 2015 at 3:08 pm #

Thank you Mayank, glad you got the link okay!

4. Grace October 29, 2015 at 5:23 pm #

This is a really interesting article! I thoroughly enjoyed reading it.

I found it particularly interesting that you mention the differences in reaction to gibbet cages in terms of placement. I.e. those found between the boundaries of different cities seemed to hold a fresh form of threat compared to those hung within cities and towns.

I was wondering, do you think the crowds that hoarded to see these spectacles played a part in the popular culture of violence, encapsulated by Rosalind Crone, that emerged during this period?

Super article! Thank you!

Eilís October 30, 2015 at 12:50 pm #

Thanks for reading Grace!

I think that it's interesting that you raised the point about the relative threats of different gibbet locations. Where gibbets were placed in a more urban context they were still on the peripheries i.e by docksides. This nearness to the hustle of city life may have made them slightly less threatening yes, whilst still keeping them at a safe distance.

As for a culture of violence, I'd say that the act of gibbeting (as in public hanging) would certainly have attracted crowds which authorities would have been wary of, especially given the bloodthirsty nature of the entertainment – but the gibbets themselves after hanging had taken place appear to have become more an elite talking-point and source of folklore narratives than sites inciteful of popular violence. Though I would be interested to explore this idea further – thanks!

The Port Towns and Urban Cultures group is dedicated to furthering our understanding of the social and cultural impact of life in port towns from the eighteenth century to the modern period. Find out more.

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https://multoghost.wordpress.com/2016/09/06/the-mbya-guarani-creation-myth/

Ghosts of story, myth, or anywhere else....

Posted on September 6, 2016 by nzumel

As a follow-up to the previous installment of my hummingbird folklore series, here is a version of the Mbyá-Guaraní creation myth, as rendered by Paraguayan anthropologist León Cadogan. He apparently got this story from an informant he names Cantalicio, the mburuvicha [chief] of Yvypytã (a site loated near Colonia Mauricio José Troche). This is my translation of his Spanish rendering.

Note that in this version, the creator and Supreme Being is not Ñamandú, but Ñande Ru Pa Pa Tenonde — apparently a different god. Ñamandú in this version is the god of the sun, and the source of life and human livelihood. Judging from this myth, Ñamandú is still the god that the Mbyá venerated the most.

In his text, Cadogan gives this myth in the context of his etymology of the term aju'y, the name still used by the people of Guairá for the black laurel (Cordia megalantha, I think). The chapter in his book is titled "La Columna de la Tierra", which I'll render "The Pillar of the Earth."



Jungle

The Pillar of the Earth

The Supreme Being, Nande Ru Pa Pa Tenonde, assumed human form in the midst of the primeval darkness; he sat upon his throne (apyka), with a feathered cap (jeguaka), emblem of masculinity, on his head; with his scepter (yvyra'i), emblem of power, in his right hand; and he contemplated the immense darkness, the infinity of chaos, pytũ yma, before he began the task of creation.

He looked towards the east and there emerged the celestial vault, the original paradise, *Yva rypy Tonde*, divided into four regions: the first, that of the sunrise, considered by the Mbyá as the first of the paradises, is the abode of Karai Ru Ete, who was

created simultaneously with his region in the heavens. Karai Ru Ete is the god of fire, the master of the sound of the crackling of flames, *Tataendy Ryapu Ja*. Karai Amba, the abode of Karai, is the name that we give to this region of the heavens.

The second region, that extends from the abode of Karai Ru Ete until the zenith or center of the original Paradises, *Yva rypy mbyte*, is the abode of Jakaira Ru Ete, created also simultaneously with his Paradise or *Amba*. Jakaira Ru Ete is the lord of the life-giving mist, *tatachina*, that appears every year at the beginning of spring, transforming the old year into the new year and infusing new life in all beings.

The third region, that covers the center of the heavens and extends from both sides of the zenith, is the Paradise of Ñandu Ru Ete, god of the Sun. It is Ñamandu Ru Ete to whom we owe life; without him it would be impossible to exist; we invoke him daily when we undertake our hunting trips or go into the jungle in search of honey; he is the fountain of all life and father of the gods, and we invoke him daily in our ritual greetings.

And from the Paradise of Namandu Ru Ete until the horizon extends the Paradise of Tupã Yma, the god of lightning, thunder, rain and hail, ruler of the sea and all the waters. His paradise, that of the setting sun, we call Tupã Amba, the abode of Tupã and him we call Tupã Ru Ete.

Having finished the task of creating the heavens and the great gods who later became the masters of the Universe, our First Father began the creation of the earth, causing to emerge from the darkness a miraculous tree, *yvyra ju'y vatã*, a miraculous pillar of hardwood to support the great mass of matter that was emerging

from between his fingers. Then he created five eternal palm trees, *Pindovy*, one in the abode of Karai, one in that of Tupã, one in the center of the earth and one each to the north and south respectively. Upon these eternal palm trees rest the foundations of the Universe.

Among the branches of the *ahu'y* [black laurel] a small green grasshopper (*tuku charãrã i*) happily chirped. A hummingbird, (*mainomby*), hovered around the Creator, enlivening His tasks; while a small owl (*urukure'a*), sheltered Him from the rays of the sun already shining in the firmament. These three beings, the grasshopper with the earth, along with the *tatu'i* or small armadillo; the *mbói yma* or *ñandurie* (a tiny snake); and the *ynambu pytã* or great prairie partridge, are the only living beings that are not reincarnations of human beings who were later transformed into animals as punishment for their transgressions.

The *aju'y* is the impermanent image, *ta'anga*, of the eternal, evergreen, hardwood pillar, *yvyra ju'y vatã*, created by Ñande Ru to support the earth; for this reason, we who still follow the precepts left to us by our ancestors prefer to use for the construction of our houses, in those places where it is abundant, the cedar (*Yvyra Ñamandu*), created especially for this purpose by our Father Ñamandu.

This, according the guaraní traditions preserved by the Mbyá of Guairá, is the first chapter of the "Book of Genesis" of the indigenous race....

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Image

Jungle at dusk, Paraguay. Photo by aranha. Source: Pixabay

This entry was posted in Folklore, Folktale and tagged creation myth, Guarani Mythology, hummingbird folklore, hummingbirds, Mbyá-Guaraní, mythology, Paraguay, South America. Bookmark the permalink.

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Medicine at the Olympics: 120 years of medical history

Vanessa Heggie Tuesday 9 August 2016 Last modified on Tuesday 9 August 2016

theguardian.com

It's not all about doping: Olympic medical history includes doctors 'in sheds' waiting for swimmers, a gymnast injured by a hat pin, and a marathoner who had to steal peaches to keep himself going



Competitors in the 1908 London Olympic Marathon leaving Windsor on route to London. These were the first Olympic competitors who were medically screened and banned from taking 'dope'. Photograph: PA A formidable team: gold medal-winning British relay swimming team, Stockholm, 1912 Photograph: Popperfoto/BTH An offical poster from the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games on display at the IOC Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic The marathon caused controversy for 1904 (St Louis) Museum /Allsport/Getty Images British Olympic gymnast Cissie Davies of Great Britain on the balance beam at Empress Hall, Earl's Court, during the August 1948. Photograph: Keystone/Hulton

Archive/Getty Images

Doping gets so much attention in coverage of the Olympics that it's easy to overlook the other medical work going on; but doctors (and later nurses, physiotherapists, nutritionists and all sorts of biomedical staff) have been present at the Games from the very beginning: Athens, 1896.

Dog carts, Oxo, and life-saving advice

In 1896 (Athens) the marathon and water sports get most of the medical attention because they are thought to be particularly dangerous – as well as traveling "in carts" behind the runners, doctors also waited "in sheds" to attend to swimmers. For 1900 (Paris) ambulances were laid on, and as the July weather got hotter and hotter tents were set up for the gymnasts to shelter in during their event (in the end they mostly used it to shelter from the torrential rain that came as a surprise to the organisers).

when the winner, Thomas Hicks, crossed the finish line with "dull lustreless" eyes and "ashen" face - "he could gymnastics events at the London Olympic Games, 12th scarcely lift his legs [and]...there was more or less hallucination". Hicks had struggled to complete the course and been assisted by egg white, brandy, hot

water baths and two one-sixtieth grains of sulphate of strychnine. Other runners struggled, in part because there was only one place to get water - a well - at the 12-mile mark. Many of the marathoners did not have a medical support team to provide food or drugs, including Cuban competitor Andarin Carvajal who ended up "playfully snatching" two peaches from the car of an American track official.

London in 1908 improved on this situation considerably: for the first time entrants to the marathon had to produce a doctors' certificate (or be medically examined) to prove they were in a fit state to run the race, and the first ever doping ban was introduced. "Dope of all kinds" was forbidden during the marathon, although with no doping tests – and no definition of dope – the doctors patrolling the course had to use their own judgement. Refreshment stalls were set up, many provided by Oxo, so runners could have an Athlete's Flask and regular access to rice pudding, raisins, bananas, soda and milk, as well as hot Oxo, and (rather disgusting-sounding) cold Oxo and soda.

In 1912 (Stockholm) the organisers asked cyclists as well as marathoners to have fitness certificates. They also set aside three rooms in the stadium with beds and light operating equipment



A formidable team: gold medal-winning British relay swimming team, Stockholm, 1912 Photograph: Popperfoto/BTH An offical poster from the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games on display at the IOC Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images British Olympic gymnast Cissie Davies of Great Britain on the balance beam at Empress Hall, Earl's Court, during the August 1948. Photograph: Keystone/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

g for emergencies (most were minor, including one "wound" caused by a hat-pin" to a female gymnast), and five medical stations were created along the course of the marathon. All this did not prevent the first Olympic death Francesco Lazaro, from Portugal, collapsed and died, despite prompt roadside attendance and evacuation to a hospital. In response the seven doctors on duty at the stadium clinic wrote an open letter to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) recommending that the marathon should in future be scheduled during the cooler part of the day (i.e. not at 1.45pm).

Red Cross Nurses & traumatised testicles

This medical advice was heeded, and for the first Games after the First World War - 1920 (Antwerp) - the organising committee scheduled the marathon for 4pm. Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic First aid was now coordinated by the Red Cross, an organisation which had played such a crucial role in coordinating health care during the war; nearly 50 gymnastics events at the London Olympic Games, 12th doctors and 200 nurses and ambulance personnel worked in first aid rooms and tents near the competition sites. Only a few serious injuries occurred, the most

common being trauma to the testicle (three cases) alongside broken bones and "a transfixion wound of the arm" caused by a javelin.



A formidable team: gold medal-winning British relay swimming team, Stockholm, 1912 Photograph: Popperfoto/BTH An offical poster from the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games on display at the IOC Olympic 1934 Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during

the 1932 Olympic Games in

The Medical Services' focus remained on emergencies and injuries in 1924 (Paris), where, again, competitors collapsed during the marathon, including a British runner who was evacuated to hospital. This was despite the fact that the British brought an official team doctor for track and field - Adolphe Abrahams, brother of runner Harold who inspired Chariots of Fire (Adolphe had been involved with "team GB" as early as 1908, but in a more unofficial capacity).

To avoid future problems the British team brought in medical screening for all athletes going to Amsterdam in 1928. Here medical attention was particularly focused on the women's 800m, run for the first time against strong opposition. Exaggerated stories about "collapsing" women were used as an excuse to ban all female track events longer than 200m; meanwhile men continued not just to collapse but to be medically evacuated from the marathon without the IOC thinking it needed to be banned. Meanwhile, at the Winter Games in 1928 (St Moritz), a meeting of interested sports medics led to the founding of the Association Internationale Medico-Sportive (AIMS), which became the Fédération Internationale de Médecine Sportive (FIMS) in

Game Changer: the Olympic Village shapes modern sports medicine

1932 was the real start of familiar modern medical provision at the Olympics, as Los Angeles built the first ever Olympic Village. This meant that for the

Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images British Olympic gymnast Cissie Davies of Great Britain on the balance beam at Empress Hall, Earl's Court, during the gymnastics events at the London Olympic Games, 12th August 1948. Photograph: Keystone/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

first time a dedicated Olympic "hospital" was built, with 24-hour staffing and extensive facilities, including radiography and a laboratory. Only 18 patients had injuries or illnesses too serious for the Village facilities and had to be sent elsewhere; good news for athletes as Village healthcare was free, but Californian hospitals were not (although some offered "special rates" for sick athletes). Public health also became an issue in LA, and the large medical team organised experiments into the best way to prevent athlete's foot, and installed footbaths.



A formidable team: gold medal-winning British relay swimming team, Stockholm, 1912 Photograph: Popperfoto/BTH An offical poster from the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games on display at the IOC Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC he had competed "against the Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images British Olympic gymnast Cissie Davies of Great Britain on the balance beam at Empress Hall, Earl's Court, during the gymnastics events at the London Olympic Games, 12th August 1948. Photograph: Keystone/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Contagious diseases were kept at bay in 1936 (Berlin) by disinfecting pools, footbaths and regularly inspecting all the kitchens. Berlin's organising committee built an even bigger hospital: two storeys, 27 rooms, and a medical team of 171 volunteer doctors and 200 auxiliary staff – many drawn from the German armed forces. Most injuries were minor, although a Romanian boxer died from blood poisoning, apparently because express orders of his physician, while suffering from boils which had not completely healed". Ironically, given the Games happened under the gaze of Chancellor Adolf Hitler, and on the brink of war, the organising

committee made a big deal about international cooperation, flagging their "very modern" telephone network for medical emergencies, and introducing a medical translation service to "devel[op] closer connections with the foreign doctors".

Despite taking place in a London still on the ration book, the 'austerity Games' of 1948 managed to provide extensive healthcare services. There was no village, but a polyclinic was installed in Wembley stadium with 12 beds, and facilities for first aid, minor surgery, physiotherapy and massage – elsewhere medical facilities at sports grounds were co-opted, extended or renovated for the Games. Athletes and the general public were treated separately. The St John's Ambulance dealt with the crowds, while 150 volunteers (mostly from the Royal Army Medical Corps) focused on the athletes and team members.

Private companies chipped in too: Boots the Chemist provided free drugs and pharmaceutical advice, and installed a 24-hour, multi-lingual staff service in their Piccadilly branch. TJ Smith & Nephew Ltd donated first aid materials, and local hospitals (some about to become part of the NHS) promised care and beds for athletes. For the first time two beds were dedicated, at the Atkinson-Morley Hospital, for psychiatric cases, although "It [was] of course understood that if any competitor became dangerously insane that he could not be accommodated at this most respectable hospital."



A formidable team: gold medal-winning British relay swimming team, Stockholm, 1912 Photograph: Popperfoto/BTH An offical poster from the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games on display at the IOC Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images Male athletes stretch in the Olympic Village during the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Photograph: IOC Olympic Museum /Allsport/Getty Images British Olympic gymnast Cissie Davies of Great Britain on the balance beam at Empress Hall, Earl's Court, during the gymnastics events at the London Olympic Games, 12th August 1948. Photograph: Keystone/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

By 1952 (Helsinki) medicine at the Olympics had settled into a pattern that looks very familiar today: polyclinics or mini-hospitals were built at the village and a huge network of first aid and emergency post set up; local healthcare institutions promised care for serious and specialist cases, and voluntary first aid organisations deal separately with crowds and visitors; military support was gradually phased out in favour of civilian volunteers, hundreds – later thousands – of whom were coordinated by an expert medical committee; and private companies offer sponsorship or donations.

Some of the burden on host countries was reduced as national teams began to bring more of their own medical support – including masseurs, trainers and nutritionists as well as team doctors. But host countries have faced new dilemmas, particularly the need to coordinate drug and sex testing from the 1960s onwards. It remains to be seen if we remember Rio for its "polyclinic" (whose equipment is to be donated to local healthcare organisations), or its extraordinary attempt to find 5000 medical volunteers, or for the very specific challenge it faces of dealing with fears about Zika or polluted water.

All of the official reports for Summer and Winter Games from 1896 onwards can be found in the LA84 Foundation digital library- a fantastic resource for the history of sport (and sport science) and a legacy project from the 1984 Los Angeles Games. Quotes in this article are taken from these reports.

comments

Global_Nomad1d ago

An interesting read that at once reminds us how 'modern' things were at the beginning of the last century but also how much was unknown. I am sure that we will look back and think the same of the beginning of this century. As an aside we may also think how oddly conservative we can be now - the swimming costumes above are notable for their transparency compared to the heavily covered lady at the centre. Would be interesting to know what reactions and outrage there was either about clothing or medical intervention.

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The mystery of a medieval anatomical specimen

By strangeremains on September 5, 2016 • (0)



Anterior and posterior views of the 13th century anatomical specimens. Image credit: Bill Jamieson from the Archives of Medical Science.

In 2003, a medical antiquities dealer sold an unusual item, a partial mummified body, to a private Canadian collector. This specimen only consisted of a partial skull, neck, and top of

the torso, and measured 17.3 inches by 18.9 inches (44cm x 48cm). Very little was known about his dissected body, so a team of forensic scientists came together to shed some light on this medical artifact.

A multidisciplinary analysis, which included an anthropological analysis, genetic tests, radiological examination, and radiocarbon dating, was conducted on the mummified body in 2012. Philippe Charlier, from the Department of Forensic Medicine and Pathology at the University Hospital R. Poincaré, and colleagues published their research in an article titled "A glimpse into the early origins of medieval anatomy through the oldest conserved human dissection (Western Europe, 13th c. A.D.)."

A morphological examination revealed rodent bite marks and traces of insect infestation. When scientists looked closely enough they could even see red facial hair. The person who preserved this specimen sawed off the top of the skull, removed the brain, and sectioned the torso horizontally several inches below the shoulders. Researchers observed saw marks on the 4th and 5th thoracic vertebrae, both scapular bodies, the sternal manubrium, and parts of the 2nd through 5th left and right ribs.1

After an anthropological analysis of the skull, the team estimated that this was a Caucasian male who was at least 45 years old when he died. They observed osteoarthritis in the jaw (temporomandibular joint) and collarbones (clavicles). The team also found that the man also experienced major tooth loss before he died because he had only the front 8 teeth in his lower jaw (mandible).1

Charlier and his team mentioned an "intense wood smoke odor" associated with the dissected body and thought it was possible that smoking was used to mummify the corpse. The preservation method also included a mixture of a form of mercury called cinnabar, Cassel earth, and gypsum injected into the veins and arteries. Charlier et al write that the presence of the red mercury-based vascular filling maybe "indirect proof of the use of syringes – or, at least, vascular injection material – during the 13th c."1

A tissue sample was extracted for a mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) test to try to find out where the man's matrilineal ancestors originated. But the recovered genetic sequence was not long enough to determine a mitochondrial haplogroup. Although the tests did confirm that the specimen is indeed male.1

Researchers weren't able to discern the identity of this mummified corpse, his cause of death, or who preserved his remains. 1

Another tissue sample was taken for radiocarbon dating and the results showed that the anatomical specimen dates to the medieval period between 1200 and 1280 A.D. This date range makes this specimen important, because, according to Charlier et al., "Fragments of dissected human bodies dating from before the 19th century are rare and are mainly found in archaeological contexts." 1

This partial cadaver was preserved at a time when the practice of human dissection was revived at medical schools after being dormant in Europe since the time of the ancient Greeks. Greek physicians, like Herophilus and Erasistratus, practiced anatomical dissections in the 3rd century B.C. 1 But in subsequent centuries, Greek and Roman physicians preferred surface examinations of the human body or the dissection of animals. The practice went into decline across Europe during the Dark Ages, or the early part of the Medieval Period, between 500 and 1000 A.D. 1

There was a renewed interest in the study of medicine in Europe during the 12th and 13th centuries thanks to the spread of universities. Mondino de Liuzzi, a physician who taught at the University of Bologna who is credited with being the first to reintroduce the instruction of anatomy in medical schools, conducted the first public dissection in Europe since Herophilus and Erasistratus on a criminal's corpse in 1315.1,2,3 Although cadaveric dissections started to be performed in these early European medical schools, they were heavily regulated by the church and local governments.1,4

The reemergence of anatomical dissections in Europe led to the advent of European forensic science. The earliest written record of a European autopsy happened in Italy in 1286 and was conducted so that a physician could determine the source of an epidemic.1 In 1315, the city of Bologna became the first European city to establish a system of forensic examinations by experts.5

The anatomical research and forensic science are linked because advances in the former lead to progress in the latter. The knowledge of normal and abnormal anatomy is necessary for medical examiners to accurately determine cause of death. For example, medical examiners need to understand how diseases affect various organs, the effects of poison on the body, or the signs of inconspicuous fatal injuries in a corpse. So the discovery of artifacts that relate to the history of medicine, particularly the field anatomy, are really interesting especially if forensic science can be used to reveal a little bit about the specimens...sort of like a circle of science.

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Medieval graffiti brings a new understanding of the past – Matthew Champion | Aeon Essays

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A selection of medieval compass drawn designs from Belaugh church in Norfolk. *All images* courtesy NSMGS

Matthew Champion

is a British historian and archaeologist. He is interested in architectural investigation, heritage planning and the environment, and is the author of Medieval Graffiti: The Lost Voices of England's

Churches (2015).

All of us can imagine the medieval world. Our imagination was created by our upbringing, the books we read, and the films we saw. Imagining the Middle Ages is an act that usually starts in childhood, and changes slowly as we grow older. From the brightly coloured pages of a child's history book to the visceral panoramas of the latest season of *Game of Thrones*, how we see the Middle Ages changes. In most cases, however, the fundamental perspective remains the same: it's an elite view of the medieval past, a Middle Ages composed of princes and kings, of knights and fair damsels in distress. It is a vision of the past that includes the splendour of great cathedrals and the brooding darkness of mighty castles. A past of banquets and battles. But it has little bearing upon reality.

The problem with our view of the Middle Ages is that it excludes the vast majority of people who lived in it, so it's a highly partial and misleading picture of that world. Just like today, most medieval people did not belong to top 5 per cent of society, they weren't kings, princes, knights, or damsels. Most men, women and children were commoners. It is no coincidence that this other, everyday, 95 per cent of the population was the one who did most of the work.

Putting aside farming, food processing and survival, it was these workers who were responsible for actually building most of what we think of when the Middle Ages come to mind. These are the people who built the magnificent medieval cathedrals, the craftsmen who constructed the dour and monumental castles. The workers whose blood and sweat bonds together the stones of every medieval church. They are the men whose deft fingers filled window spaces with blindingly bright stained glass. These are the people who built the Middle Ages. Yet we really know very little about them.

Composite image including a tiny selection of the many thousands of medieval compass drawn designs being discovered in English churches.

The voices of medieval commoners are largely silent. The science of archaeology tells us something about their general health, about what they wore, where they lived, and what they ate.



Enigmatic seventeenth century memorial inscriptions from Norwich cathedral Medieval demon complete with 'flesh hook' still stalking the walls of Beachamwell church in Norfolk Simple late medieval example of ship graffiti from Cley-next-the-Sea church in Norfolk

Enigmatic seventeenth century memorial inscriptions from Norwich document, account book or legal proceedings but, with low levels of literacy throughout much of the Middle Ages

Modern techniques such as isotope analysis can even tell us details such as where they grew up. The wonders of modern science have their limitations, however. Archaeology and isotope analysis cannot tell us what these people felt and thought, what they dreamed of and feared, what they thought was funny or what they held dear.

Most medieval documents come with the same limitations. Occasionally, the lower classes turn up in the odd surviving document, account book or legal proceedings but, with low levels of literacy throughout much of the Middle Ages,

these documents are usually the work of third parties. They were written and compiled by the priests, scribes and lawyers of the elite. They refer to the lower orders, but are most certainly not in their own words. Even where they turn up in the bright borders of illuminated manuscripts, it is alongside the fantasy beasts and grotesques of the medieval imagination rather than as a reflection of reality. Their voice – the voice of the medieval commoner, of the vast majority of medieval people – is largely lost.

The past five or six years have seen a massive rise in one particular area of medieval studies – an area that has the potential to give back a voice to the silent majority of the medieval population. Specialists have been studying medieval church graffiti for many decades. But new digital imaging technologies, and the recent establishment of numerous volunteer recording programmes, have transformed its scope and implications. The study of early graffiti has become commonplace. The first large-scale survey began in the English county of Norfolk a little over six years ago. Norfolk is home to more than 650 surviving medieval churches – more than in any other area in England. The results of that survey have been astonishing.



Enigmatic seventeenth century memorial inscriptions from Norwich cathedral Medieval demon complete with 'flesh hook' still stalking the walls of Beachamwell church in Norfolk Simple late medieval example of ship graffiti from Cley-next-the-Sea church in Norfolk

To date, the Norfolk survey has recorded more than 26,000 previously unknown medieval inscriptions. More recent surveys begun in other English counties are revealing similar levels of medieval graffiti. A survey of Norwich Cathedral recently found that the building contained more than 5,000 individual inscriptions. Some of them dated as far back as the 12th century. It has also become clear that the graffiti inscriptions are unlike just about any other kind of source in medieval studies. They are informal. Many of the inscriptions are images rather than text. This means that they could have been made by just about anyone in the Middle

Ages, not just princes and priests. In fact, the evidence on the walls suggests that they were made

by everyone: from the lord of the manor and parish priest, all the way down to the lowliest of commoners. These newly discovered inscriptions are giving back individual voices to generations of long-dead medieval churchgoers. The inscriptions number in the hundreds of thousands, and they are opening an entire new world of research.

Today, graffiti is seen as both destructive and anti-social. It is widely regarded as vandalism, not as something to be encouraged on ancient monuments and historic sites. That attitude is largely a modern one. Until recent centuries, people of just about every level of society carved graffiti into ancient buildings. It simply wasn't seen as something to be condemned. The Coliseum in Rome, or Bodiam Castle in England, to take just two examples of key European heritage sites, are covered in centuries-worth of graffiti. Many of these inscriptions were created by members of the upper classes undertaking a 'Grand Tour' at the end of their education, and date to the 18th and 19th century. In the same tradition, early visitors to the Egyptian pyramids didn't even need to carve the graffiti themselves – they could hire someone to do it for them. Graffiti was seen as something that was both accepted and acceptable.

Medieval masons, the people who actually built these monuments, left the earliest markings to be found on any medieval church or cathedral. The traditional story is that each individual mason would have his own personal mark, which he'd inscribe wherever he'd worked. These angular marks, known today as 'mason's marks', acted as a form of quality control. They also allowed the 'master mason', who doubled as architect and paymaster, to calculate how much each of his workmen was due to be paid. Masons today continue this old practice of marking their work, but their marks are more discreet, hidden away between stones and in darkened corners. Occasionally, the medieval masons left something more.

Their pragmatic approach to the construction of these stone monuments meant that the walls themselves sometimes served as drawing boards. In a few cases, such as at Binham Priory in Norfolk or Ely Cathedral in Cambridgeshire, intricate working drawings can be found etched into the stones. The designs at Binham all appear to relate to the building of the priory's great west front in the 1240s. It is one of the earliest marvels of gothic window design to be built in England. The nameless master-mason who undertook the work was apparently unfamiliar and uncomfortable with this innovative style. Step by step, he worked out the specifics of the design on the walls of the half-finished priory church. Sadly, the great west window, which acted as a centrepiece to the design, structurally failed in the late 18th century. It then had to be bricked up – and remains so today. From the mason's inscriptions, however, we have a clear indication of how this groundbreaking design would have looked.

Witch marks were, simply, prayers made solid in stone

Many of the markings discovered in medieval churches are all but identical. A survey of a church in northern England will reveal the same graffiti motifs and markings as those found in a church on the English South Coast. Even more remarkably, the same medieval markings recorded in most English churches are in churches across the whole of western Europe. Essentially, everywhere the medieval Christian church thrived, medieval Europeans inscribed their places of worship with the same graffiti marks. Known as 'ritual protection marks', medieval people believed that these symbols warded off evil influences. Today they are more commonly called 'witch marks'.

Witch marks make up about a third of all recorded inscriptions. This means that we have many, many thousands of examples of them. Some churches, such as that at Cowlinge in Suffolk, can contain many dozens of witch marks. It is a rare church that doesn't contain at least a small

collection. These markings make clear the differences between the medieval and modern concepts of graffiti. Much modern graffiti tends to be collections of names and dates, examples of people 'leaving their mark' upon a place. However, witch marks belong to the world of faith and spirituality. They were not a replacement for the orthodox prayers of the Christian church. As much as the Church might have disapproved, people used them in association, as supplements to orthodox prayers. They enhanced the spiritual, and symbolised God's protection from the powers of evil. They were, simply, prayers made solid in stone.

What makes the witch marks even more powerful is that they were also personal. The religion of medieval England was one of hierarchy, with parishioners' own worship and interactions being organised and mediated by the parish priest. The priest, in turn, was subservient to the local bishop and, eventually, to the Pope himself. The prayers in the stonework altogether bypass that hierarchy, and it's a hierarchy from which almost all other historical sources from the medieval world originate. These are personal interactions and statements by everyday members of the parish congregation with 'their' God. There is no need of intercession by priests, bishops or the Pope. In that way, they reveal things that the official, learned histories of medieval religion never can. These are not actions based deep in medieval theology and scholarly argument. They are acts of personal faith and belief, reflecting real people's hopes, dreams and fears.

Many of the other images on the walls were born of an agricultural society. We see windmills, horses and geese – fixtures of peasant life. These are things that they saw every day, that were important to them, and essential to their ability to feed themselves and their families. The walls are also covered in the mundane: images of the people themselves, their faces and hands. In some cases, they left full-length portraits. Staring at the medieval walls long enough will sometimes result in the walls staring back.

Beasts and dragons are also included in the graffiti. They are strange and misshapen creatures, who seemingly walked, or flew, straight off the decorative borders of an illuminated manuscript. There are images of knights on horseback, heraldry and coats of arms, suggesting that the graffiti was either created by those from the knightly classes, or perhaps those who aspired to be. The walls are full of the peoples' hopes. They also contain their darkest fears.

Take, for example, angels and demons: the medieval church was awash with images of them. Angels were carved into the elaborate roof timbers, their wings outstretched soaring high above the congregation. Angels flew in the bright wall paintings that once adorned almost every medieval church, passing news to the Virgin Mary or leading the souls of the departed heavenward. Angels guarded the ends of dark wooden pews and pale stone fonts, carved there, bearing shields emblazoned with the arms of saints.

The demons are there, too. Grotesque beasts painted on the walls above the chancel arch, casting the souls of the damned down into the everlasting sufferings of hell. Comic demons sitting beneath the carved seats of the choir-stalls, bared backsides raised to noisily salute the clergy who perched upon them. Demons in coloured glass dance in the windows.

Demons were very real, and to be feared. This fear drove people to carve their counter-curses into the walls of the parish church

But while the medieval church was formally adorned with angels and demons, when it comes to the graffiti on the walls, there are only demons – many dozens of them, from the grotesque to the comic, dancing across the angel-free stonework.



Enigmatic seventeenth century memorial inscriptions from Norwich cathedral Medieval demon complete with 'flesh hook' still stalking the walls of Beachamwell church in Norfolk Simple late medieval example of ship graffiti from Cley-next-the-Sea church in Norfolk

Why are there no angels? The reason is quite simple. The graffiti on the walls shows only what those who made it thought was real and immediate. Angels were heavenly beings. They littered the pages of the Bible, but could not be expected to play a part in the lives of the people in the world. Demons, on the other hand, were very real indeed. It was demons who were responsible for any sudden illness or unexplained death. Demons brought down a blight upon the harvest crops. Demons unbalanced the mind of the simpleton, and brought on the terrifying storms that could lay waste a whole year's crop in a single afternoon.

Demons were real and to be feared. This fear drove medieval people to carve their counter-curses into the walls of the parish church.

Of all the graffiti being recorded in English churches, text inscriptions are actually rather rare. They make up only about 5 per cent of all the discovered markings: again, a distinct difference with modern graffiti. The rarity is in part a result of the low rates of contemporary literacy, but it is also testimony to the power of images over the written word. Many of the text inscriptions are difficult to read even by long-practiced historians. Generation after generation of wear and abrasion has left them in a sorry state. Even those that can still be made out are sometimes less than illuminating. The poor level of education among some parish priests, and the use of shortcuts and contractions, is reflected in the sometimes appalling attempts at Latin found on the walls. In many cases, the Latin is so bad that the only person who could probably have read it was the very same person who wrote it. Sometimes the writing on the walls simply can't be read.

So what are these ancient markings on our medieval churches? Are they simply the random scribblings and doodles of bored choirboys, or do they have a deeper significance? Is there a meaning to some of them beyond the obvious? Beyond the simple statement of 'I was here'? Recent research suggests that, yes, they are very important.

One of the most striking types of medieval graffiti is that of medieval ships. These small images are among the best-studied of all the graffiti, and are beginning to shed light on the mystery of exactly why they were made. When the modern surveys began, it was widely presumed that ship graffiti was confined to coastal churches: simple images created by local people of the ships they saw every day. However, research has shown that ship graffiti is found just about anywhere in the country. There are examples from Wiltshire and Leicestershire, about as far from the sea as one can get in mainland England. Even more intriguing, all the examples of ship graffiti, even those found many miles inland, appear to show sea-going vessels. The church at Blakeney, on the north Norfolk coast in the east of England, can help to explain why there is so much graffiti of these little ships.

Blakeney's church is covered in early graffiti inscriptions, and they are spread fairly evenly throughout the building. All the dozens of examples of ship graffiti, however, are to be found clustered in one clear and distinct area. Without exception, all of the images were inscribed on the



Enigmatic seventeenth century memorial inscriptions from Norwich cathedral Medieval demon complete with 'flesh hook' still stalking the walls of Beachamwell church in Norfolk Simple late medieval example of ship graffiti from Cley-next-the-Sea church in Norfolk

pillars of the south arcade – and most are on the single pillar that sits at the eastern end. According to maritime historians, the images were created over a period of 200-300 years. Despite this, each little ship respects the space of those around them, never crossing over one another. This tells us that the earlier ships were still clearly visible when the later images were created centuries later.

People sat in the dark, praying for the safety of a long-drowned ship, and etched their fears and demons into the walls

ship graffiti from Cley-next-the-Sea church in Norfolk

real clue to their meaning. The eastern pillar into which they are carved sits opposite the side altar in the south aisle. From the historical record we know that this altar was dedicated to a church's patron saint. In the case of Blakeney, that was Saint Nicholas. Now better known for his association with children and Christmas, throughout the Middle Ages St Nicholas was regarded as the patron of 'those in peril upon the sea'. The ship graffiti is clustered around the St Nicholas altar for a reason. Historians and archaeologists believe that each of these little ships was a 'votive' offering – quite literally, a prayer carved into the stonework. Exactly what that prayer was, we might never know. Was it a prayer of thanksgiving for a voyage safely undertaken, or a prayer for safe passage on a voyage yet to be made? The fact that some of the ships appear damaged has led some to suggest that these might be prayers for ships, crews and loved ones that never made it home.

This is the true value of searching out these ancient inscriptions on the wall. These little prayers and etchings offer one of the few avenues into the hopes and feelings of those who left their mark many centuries ago. It is not a world of knights, princes and kings. It is a world of real, fallible human beings. People who sat in the dark, praying for the safety of a long-drowned ship, and etched their fears and demons into the walls. Quite simply, the medieval graffiti gives us back the lost voices of the medieval world.

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The Mermaid's Vengeance

http://cornishfolkloretales.blogspot.co.uk/2016/07/the-mermaids-vengence.html



Folklore of Cornish Holy Wells

Tuesday, 5 July 2016



IN one of the deep valleys of the parish of Perranzabuloe, which are remarkable for their fertility, and especially for the abundance of fruit which the orchards produce, lived in days long ago, amidst a rudely-civilised people, a farmer's labourer, his wife, with one child, a daughter. The man and woman were equally industrious. The neatly white-washed walls of their mud-built cottage, the well-kept gravelled paths, and carefully-weeded beds of their small garden, in which flowers were cultivated for ornament, and vegetables for use, proclaimed at once the character of the inmates. In contrast with the neighbouring cottages, this one, although smaller than many others, had a superior aspect, and the occupiers of it exhibited a strong contrast to those peasants and miners amidst whom they dwelt.

Pennaluna, as the man was called, or Penna the Proud, as he was, in no very friendly spirit, named by his less thoughtful and more impulsive fellows, was, as we have said, a farmer's labourer. His master was a wealthy yeoman, and he, after many years' experience, was so convinced of the exceeding industry and sterling honesty of Penna, that he made him the manager of an outlying farm in this parish, under the hind (or hine--the Saxon pronunciation is still retained in the West of England), or general supervisor of this and numerous other extensive farms.

Penna was too great a favourite with the Squire to be a favourite of the hind's; he was evidently jealous of him, and from not being himself a man of very strict principles, he hated the unobtrusive goodness of his underling, and was constantly on the watch to discover some cause of complaint. It was not, however, often that he was successful in this. Every task committed to the care of Penna, and he was often purposely overtasked, was executed with great care and despatch. With the wife of Penna, however, the case was unfortunately different. Honour Penna was as industrious as her husband, and to him she was in all respects a helpmate. She had, however, naturally a proud spirit, and this had been encouraged in her youth by her parents. Honour was very pretty as a girl, and, indeed, she retained much beauty as a woman. The only education she received was the wild one of experience, and this within a very narrow circle. She grew an ignorant girl, amongst ignorant men

and women, few of them being able to write their names, and scarcely any of them to read. There was much native grace about her, and she was flattered by the young men, and envied by the young women, of the village, the envy and the flattery being equally pleasant to her. In the same village was born, and brought up, Tom Chenalls, who had, in the course of years, become hind to the Squire. Tom, as a young man, had often expressed himself fond of Honour, but he was always distasteful to the village maiden, and eventually, while yet young, she was married to Pennaluna, who came from the southern coast, bringing with him the recommendation of being a stranger, and an exceedingly hard-working man, who was certain to earn bread, and something more, for his wife and family. In the relations in which these people were now placed towards each other, Chenalls had the opportunity of acting ungenerously towards the Pennas. The man bore this uncomplainingly, but the woman frequently guarrelled with him whom she felt was an enemy, and whom she still regarded but as her equal. Chenalls was a skilled farmer, and hence was of considerable value to the Squire; but although he was endured for his farming knowledge and his business habits, he was never a favourite with his employer. Penna, on the contrary, was an especial favourite, and the evidences of this were so often brought strikingly under the observation of Chenalls, that it increased the irritation of his hate, for it amounted to that. For years things went on thus. There was the tranquil suffering of an oppressed spirit manifested in Penna, the angry words and actions of his wife towards the oppressor, and, at the same time, as she with much fondness studied to make their humble home comfortable for her husband, she reviled him not unfrequently for the meek spirit with which he endured his petty, but still trying, wrongs. The hind dared not venture on any positive act of wrong towards those people, yet he lost no chance of annoying them, knowing that the Squire's partiality for Penna would not allow him to venture beyond certain bounds, even in this direction.

Penna's solace was his daughter. She had now reached her eighteenth year, and with the well-developed form of a woman, she united the simplicity of a child. Selina, as she was named, was in many respects beautiful. Her features were regular, and had they been lighted up with more mental fire, they would have been beautiful; but the constant repose, the want of animation, left her face merely a pretty one. Her skin was beautifully white, and transparent to the blue veins which traced their ways beneath it, to the verge of that delicacy which indicates disease; but it did not pass that verge. Selina was full of health, as her well moulded form at once showed, and her clear blue eye distinctly told. At times there was a lovely tint upon the cheek, not the hectic of consumptive beauty, but a pure rosy dye, suffused by the healthy life stream, when it flowed the fastest.

The village gossips, who were always busy with their neighbours, said strange things of this girl. Indeed, it was commonly reported that the real child of the Pennas was a remarkably plain child, in every respect a different being from Selina. The striking difference between the infant and the woman was variously explained by the knowing ones. Two stories were, however, current for miles around the country. One was, that Selina's mother was constantly seen gathering dew in the morning, with which to wash her child, and that the fairies on the Towens had, in pure malice, aided her in giving a temporary beauty to the girl, that it might lead to her betrayal into crime. Why this malice, was never clearly made out. The other story was, that Honour Penna constantly bathed the child in a certain pool, amidst the arched rocks of Perran, which was a favourite resort of the mermaids; that on one occasion the child, as if in a paroxysm of joy, leapt from her arms into the water, and disappeared. The mother, as may well be supposed, suffered a momentary agony of terror; but presently the babe swam up to the surface of the water, its little face more bright and beautiful than it had ever been before. Great was the mother's joy, and also, as the gossips say, great her surprise at the sudden change in the appearance of her offspring. The mother knew no difference in the child whom she pressed lovingly to her bosom, but all the aged crones in the parish declared it to be a changeling. This tale lived its day; but, as the girl grew on to womanhood, and

showed none of the special qualifications belonging either to fairies or mermaids, it was almost forgotten. The uncomplaining father had solace for all his sufferings in wandering over the beautiful sands with his daughter. Whether it was when the summer seas fell in musical undulations on the shore, or when, stirred by the winter tempests, the great Atlantic waves came up in grandeur, and lashed the resisting sands in giant rage, those two enjoyed the solitude. Hour after hour, from the setting sun time, until the clear cold moon flooded the ocean with her smiles of light, would the father and child walk these sands. They seemed never to weary of them and the ocean.

Almost every morning, throughout the milder seasons, Selina was in the habit of bathing, and wild tales were told of the frantic joy with which she would play with the breaking billows. Sometimes floating over, and almost dancing on the crests of the waves, at other times rushing under them, and allowing the breaking waters to beat her to the sands, as though they were loving arms, endeavouring to encircle her form. Certain it is, that Selina greatly enjoyed her bath, but all the rest must be regarded as the creations of the imagination. The most eager to give a construction unfavourable to the simple mortality of the maiden was, however, compelled to acknowledge that there was no evidence in her general conduct to support their surmises. Selina, as an only child, fared the fate of others who are unfortunately so placed, and was, as the phrase is, spoiled. She certainly was allowed to follow her own inclinations without any check. Still her inclinations were bounded to working in the garden, and to leading her father to the sea-shore. Honour Penna, sometimes, it is true, did complain that Selina could not be trusted with the most ordinary domestic duty. Beyond this, there was one other cause of grief, that was, the increasing dislike which Selina exhibited towards entering a church. The girl, notwithstanding the constant excuses of being sick, suffering from headache, having a pain in her side, and the like, was often taken, notwithstanding, by her mother to the church. It is said that she always shuddered as she passed the church-stile, and again on stepping from the porch into the church itself. When once within the house of prayer she evinced no peculiar liking or disliking, observing respectfully all the rules during the performance of the church-service, and generally sleeping, or seeming to sleep, during the sermon. Selina Pennaluna had reached her eighteenth year; she was admired by many of the young men of the parish, but, as if surrounded by a spell, she appeared to keep them all at a distance from her. About this time, a nephew to the Squire, a young soldier, who had been wounded in the wars, came into Cornwall to heal his wounds, and recover health, which had suffered in a trying campaign.

This young man, Walter Trewoofe, was a rare specimen of manhood. Even now, shattered as he was by the combined influences of wounds, an unhealthy climate, and dissipation, he could not but be admired for fineness of form, dignity of carriage, and masculine beauty. It was, however, but too evident, that this young man was his own idol, and that he expected every one to bow down with him, and worship it. His uncle was proud of Walter, and although the old gentleman could not fail to see many faults, yet he regarded them as the follies of youth, and trusted to their correction with the increase of years and experience. Walter, who was really suffering severely, was ordered by his surgeon, at first, to take short walks on the sea-shore, and, as he gained strength, to bathe. He was usually driven in his uncle's pony-carriage to the edge of the sands. Then dismounting he would walk for a short time, and quickly wearing, return in his carriage to the luxuriant couches at the manor-house.

On some of those occasions Walter had observed the father and daughter taking their solitary ramble. He was struck with the quiet beauty of the girl, and seized an early opportunity of stopping Penna to make some general inquiry respecting the bold and beautiful coast. From time to time they thus met, and it would have been evident to any observer that Walter did not so soon weary of the sands as formerly, and that Selina was not displeased with the flattering things he said to her.

Although the young soldier had hitherto led a wild life, it would appear as if for a considerable period the presence of goodness had repressed every tendency to evil in his ill-regulated heart. He continued, therefore, for some time playing with his own feelings and those of the childlike being who presented so much of romance, combined with the most homely tameness, of character. Selina, it is true, had never yet seen Walter except in the presence of her father, and it is questionable if she had ever for one moment had a warmer feeling than that of the mere pleasure--a silent pride--that a gentleman, at once so handsome, so refined, and the nephew of her father's master, should pay her any attention. Evil eyes were watching with wicked earnestness the growth of passion, and designing hearts were beating quicker with a consciousness that they should eventually rejoice in the downfall of innocence. Tom Chenalls hoped that he might achieve a triumph, if he could but once asperse the character of Selina. He took his measures accordingly. Having noticed the change in the general conduct of his master's nephew, he argued that this was due to the refining influence of a pure mind, acting on one more than ordinarily impressionable to either evil or good.

Walter rapidly recovered health, and with renewed strength the manly energy of his character began to develop itself. He delighted in horse-exercise, and Chenalls had always the best horse on the farms at his disposal. He was a good shot, and Chenalls was his guide to the best shooting-grounds. He sometimes fished, and Chenalls knew exactly where the choicest trout and the richest salmon were to be found. In fact, Chenalls entered so fully into the tastes of the young man, that Walter found him absolutely necessary to him to secure the enjoyments of a country life.

Having established this close intimacy, Chenalls never lost an opportunity of talking with Walter respecting Selina Penna. He soon satisfied himself that Walter, like most other young men who had led a dissipated life, had but a very low estimate of women generally. Acting upon this, he at first insinuated that Selina's innocence was but a mask, and at length he boldly assured Walter that the cottage girl was to be won by him with a few words, and that then he might put her aside at any time as a prize to some low-born peasant. Chenalls never failed to impress on Walter the necessity of keeping his uncle in the most perfect darkness, and of blinding the eyes of Selina's parents. Penna was, so thought Chenalls, easily managed, but there was more to be feared from the wife. Walter, however, with much artifice, having introduced himself to Honour Penna, employed the magic of that flattery, which, being properly applied, seldom fails to work its way to the heart of a weak-minded woman. He became an especial favourite with Honour, and the blinded mother was ever pleased at the attention bestowed with so little assumption, -- as she thought, -- of pride, on her daughter, by one so much above them. Walter eventually succeeded in separating occasionally, though not often, Penna and his daughter. The witching whispers of unholy love were poured into the trusting ear. Guileless herself, this child-woman suspected no guile in others, least of all in one whom she had been taught to look upon as a superior being to herself. Amongst the villagers, the constant attention of Walter Trewoofe was the subject of gossip, and many an old proverb was quoted by the elder women, ill-naturedly, and implying that evil must come of this intimacy, Tom Chenalls was now employed by Walter to contrive some means by which he could remove Penna for a period from home. He was not long in doing this. He lent every power of his wicked nature to aid the evil designs of the young soldier, and thus he brought about that separation of father and child which ended in her ruin.

Near the Land's End the squire possessed some farms, and one of them was reported to be in such a state of extreme neglect, through the drunkenness and consequent idleness of the tenant, that Chenalls soon obtained permission to take the farm from this occupier, which he did in the most unscrupulous disregard for law or right. It was then suggested that the only plan by which a

desirable occupier could be found, would be to get the farm and farm-buildings into good condition, and that Penna, of all men, would be the man to bring this quickly about. The squire was pleased with the plan. Penna was sent for by him, and was proud of the confidence which his master reposed in him. There was some sorrow on his leaving home. He subsequently said that he had had many warnings not to go, but he felt that he dared not disoblige a master who had trusted him so far, so he went.

Walter needed not any urging on the part of Chenalls, though he was always ready to apply the spur when there was the least evidence of the sense of right asserting itself in the young man's bosom. Week after week passed on. Walter had rendered himself a necessity to Selina. Without her admirer the world was cold and colourless. With him all was sunshine and glowing tints.

Three months passed thus away, and during that period it had only been possible for Penna to visit his home twice. The father felt that something like a spirit of evil stood between him and his daughter. There was no outward evidence of any change, but there was an inward sense--undefined, yet deeply felt like an overpowering fear, that some wrong had been done. On parting, Penna silently but earnestly prayed that the deep dread might be removed from his mind. There was an aged fisherman, who resided in a small cottage built on the sands, who possessed all the superstitions of his class. This old man had formed a father's liking for the simple-hearted maiden, and he had persuaded himself that there really was some foundation for the tales which the gossips told. To the fisherman, Walter Trewoofe was an evil genius. He declared that no good ever came to him, if he met Walter when he was about to go to sea. With this feeling he curiously watched the young man and maiden, and he, in after days, stated his conviction that he had seen "merry maidens rising from the depth of the waters, and floating under the billows to watch Selina and her lover. He has also been heard to say that on more than one occasion Walter himself had been terrified by sights and sounds. Certain, however, it is, these were insufficient and the might of evil passions were more powerful than any of the protecting influences of the unseen world.

Another three months had gone by, and Walter Trewoofe had disappeared from Perranzabuloe. He had launched into the gay world of the metropolis, and rarely, if ever, dreamed of the deep sorrow which was weighing down the heart he had betrayed Penna returned home, his task was done, and Chenalls had no reason for keeping him any longer from his wife and daughter Clouds gathered slowly but unremittingly around him. His daughter retired into herself no longer as of old reposing her whole soul on her father's heart. His wife was somewhat changed too, she had some secret in her heart which she feared to tell The home he had left was not the home to which he had returned It soon became evident that some shock had shaken the delicate frame of his daughter. She pined rapidly; and Penna was awakened to a knowledge of the cause by the rude rejoicing of Chenalls, who declared "that all people who kept themselves so much above other people were sure to be pulled down." On one occasion he so far tempted Penna with sneers, at his having hope to secure the young squire for a son-in-law, that the long-enduring man broke forth and administered a severe blow upon his tormentor. This was duly reported to the squire, and added thereto was a magnified story of a trap which had been set by the Penna to catch young Walter; it was represented that even now they in tended to press their claims, on account of grievous wrongs upon them, whereas it could be proved that Walter was guiltless--that he was indeed the innocent victim of designing people, who though to make money out of their assumed misfortune. The squire made his inquiries, and there were not a few who eagerly seized the opportunity to gain the friendship of Chenalls by representing this family to have been hypocrites of the deepest dye; and the poor girl especially was now loaded with a weight of iniquities of which she had no knowledge. All this ended in the dismissal of Penna from the Squire's service, and in his being deprived of the cottage in which he

had taken so much pride. Although thrown out upon the world a disgraced man, Penna faced his difficulties manfully. He cast off, as it were, the primitive simplicity of his character, and evidently worked with a firm resolve to beat down his sorrows. He was too good a workman to remain long unemployed; and although his new home was not his happy home as of old, there was no repining heard from his lips. Weaker and weaker grew Selina, and it soon became evident to all, that if she came from a spirit-world, to a spirit-world she must soon return. Grief filled the hearts of her parents, it prostrated her mother, but the effects of severe labour, and the efforts of a settled mind, appeared to tranquillise the breast of her father. Time passed on, the wounds of the soul grew deeper, and there lay, on a low bed, from which she had not strength to move, the fragile form of youth with the countenance of age. The body was almost powerless, but there beamed from the eye the evidences of a spirit getting free from the chains of clay.

The dying girl was sensible of the presence of creations other than mortal, and with these she appeared to hold converse, and to derive solace from the communion. Penna and his wife alternately watched through the night hours by the side of their loved child, and anxiously did they mark the moment when the tide turned, in the full belief that she would be taken from them when the waters of the ocean began to recede from the shore. Thus days passed on, and eventually the sunlight of a summer morning shone in through the small window of this humble cottage, on a dead mother and a living babe.

The dead was buried in the churchyard on the sands, and the living went on their ways, some rejoicingly and some in sorrow.

Once more Walter Trewoofe appeared in Perran-on-the-sands. Penna would have sacrificed him to his hatred; he emphatically protested that he had lived only to do so; but the good priest of the Oratory contrived to lay the devil who had possession, and to convince Penna that the Lord would, in His own good time, and in His own way, avenge the bitter wrong. Tom Chenalls had his hour of triumph; but from the day on which Selina died everything went wrong. The crops failed, the cattle died, hay-stacks and corn-ricks caught fire, cows slipped their calves, horses fell lame, or stumbled and broke their knees,--a succession of evils steadily pursued him. Trials find but a short resting-place with the good; they may be bowed to the earth with the weight of a sudden sorrow, but they look to heaven, and their elasticity is

restored. The evil-minded are crushed at once, and grovel on the ground in irremediable misery. That Chenalls fled to drink in his troubles appeared but the natural result to a man of his character. This unfitted him for his duties, and he was eventually dismissed from his situation. Notwithstanding that the Squire refused to listen to the appeals in favour of Chenalls, which were urged upon him by Walter, and that indeed he forbade his nephew to countenance "the scoundrel" in any way, Walter still continued his friend. By his means Tom Chenalls secured a small cottage on the cliff, and around it a little cultivated ground, the produce of which was his only visible means of support. That lonely cottage was the scene, however, of drunken carousals, and there the vicious young men, and the no less vicious young women, of the district, went after nightfall, and kept "high carnival" of sin. Walter Trewoofe came frequently amongst them; and as his purse usually defrayed the costs of a debauch, he was regarded by all with especial favour.

One midnight, Walter, who had been dancing and drinking for some hours, left the cottage wearied with his excesses, and although not drunk, he was much excited with- wine. His pathway lay along the edge of the cliffs, amidst bushes of furze and heath, and through several irregular, zigzag ways. There were lateral paths striking off from one side of the main path, and leading down to the sea-

shore. Although it was moonlight, without being actually aware of the error, Walter wandered into one of those; and before he was awake to his mistake, he found himself on the sands. He cursed his stupidity, and, uttering a blasphemous oath, he turned to retrace his steps.

The most exquisite music which ever flowed from human ups fell on his ear; he paused to listen, and collecting his unbalanced thoughts, he discovered that it was the voice of a woman singing a melancholy dirge

"The stars are beautiful, when bright They are mirror'd in the sea; But they are pale beside that light Which was so beautiful to me. My angel child, my earth-born girl, From all your kindred riven, By the base deeds of a selfish churl, And to a sand-grave driven! How shall I win thee back to ocean? How canst thou quit thy grave, To share again the sweet emotion

Of gliding through the wave?"

Walter, led by the melancholy song, advanced slowly along the sands. He discovered that the sweet, soft sounds proceeded from the other side of a mass of rocks, which project far out over the sands, and that now, at low-water, there was no difficulty in walking around it. Without hesitation he did so, and he beheld, sitting at the mouth of a cavern, one of the most beautiful women he had ever beheld. She continued her song, looking upwards to the stars, not appearing to notice the intrusion of a stranger. Walter stopped, and gazed on the lovely image before him with admiration and wonder, mingled with something of terror. He dared not speak, but fixed, as if by magic, he stood gazing on. After a few minutes, the maiden, suddenly perceiving that a man was near her, uttered a piercing shriek, and made as if to fly into the cavern. Walter sprang forward and seized her by the arm, exclaiming, "Not yet, my pretty maiden, not yet." She stood still in the position of flight, with her arm behind her, grasped by Walter, and turning round her head, her dark eyes beamed with unnatural lustre upon him. Impressionable he had ever been, but never had he experienced anything so entrancing, and at the same time so painful, as that gaze. It was Selina's face looking lovingly upon him, but it seemed to possess some new power--a might of mind from which he felt it was impossible for him to escape. Walter slackened his hold, and slowly allowed the arm to fall from his hand. The maiden turned fully round upon him. "Go!" she said. He could not move.

"Go, man!" she repeated. He was powerless.
"Go to the grave where the sinless one sleepeth!
Bring her cold corse where her guarding one weepeth;
Look on her, love her again, ay! betray her,
And wreath with false smiles the pale face of her slayer!
Go, go! now, and feel the full force of my sorrow!

For the glut of my vengeance there cometh a morrow."

Walter was statue-like, and he awoke from this trance-like state only when the waves washed his feet, and he became aware that even now it was only by wading through the waters that he could

return around the point of rocks. He was alone. He called; no one answered. He sought wildly, as far as he now dared, amidst the rocks, but the lovely woman was nowhere to be discovered.

There was no real danger on such a night as this; therefore Walter walked fearlessly through the gentle waves, and recovered the pathway up from the sands. More than once he thought he heard a rejoicing laugh, which was echoed in the rocks, but no one was to be seen. Walter reached his home and bed, but he found no sleep; and in the morning he arose with a sense of wretchedness which was entirely new to him. He feared to make any one of his rough companions a confidant, although he felt this would have relieved his heart. He therefore nursed the wound which he now felt, until a bitter remorse clouded his existence. After some days, he was impelled to visit the grave - of the lost one, and in the fullness of the most selfish sorrow, he sat on the sands and shed tears. The priest of the Oratory observed him, and knowing Walter Trewoofe, hesitated not to inquire into his cause of sorrow. His heart was opened to the holy man, and the strange tale was told--the only result being, that the priest felt satisfied it was but a vivid dream, which had resulted from a brain over-excited by drink. He, however, counselled the young man, giving him some religious instruction, and dismissed him with his blessing. There was relief in this. For some days Walter did not venture to visit his old haunt, the cottage of Chenalls. Since he could not be lost to his companions without greatly curtailing their vicious enjoyments, he was hunted up by Chenalls, and again enticed within the circle. His absence was explained on the plea of illness. Walter was, however, an altered man; there was not the same boisterous hilarity as formerly. He no longer abandoned himself without restraint to the enjoyments of the time. If he ever, led on by his thoughtless and rough-natured friends, assumed for a moment his usual mirth, it was checked by some invisible power. On such occasions he would turn deadly pale, look anxiously around, and fail back, as if ready to faint, on the nearest seat. Under these influences, he lost health. His uncle, who was really attached to his nephew, although he regretted his dissolute conduct, became now seriously alarmed. Physicians were consulted in vain; the young man pined, and the old gossips came to the conclusion that Walter Trewoofe was ill-wished, and there was a general feeling that Penna or his wife was at the bottom of it. Walter, living really on one idea, and that one the beautiful face which was, and yet was not, that of Selina, resolved again to explore the spot on which he had met this strange being, of whom nothing could be learned by any of the covert inquiries he made. He lingered long ere he could resolve on the task; but wearied, worn by the oppression of one undefined idea, in which an intensity of love was mixed with a shuddering fear, he at last gathered sufficient courage to seize an opportunity for again going to the cavern. On this occasion, there being no moon, the night was dark, but the stars shone brightly from a sky, cloudless, save a dark mist which hung heavily over the western horizon. Every spot of ground being familiar to him, who, boy and man, had traced it over many times, the partial darkness presented no difficulty. Walter had scarcely reached the level sands, which were left hard by the retiring tide, than he heard again the same magical voice as before. But now the song was a joyous one, the burthen of it being

"Join all hands Might and main, Weave the sands, Form a chain, He, my lover,

Comes again!"

He could not entirely dissuade himself but that he heard this repeated by many voices; but he put the thought aside, referring it, as well he might, to the numerous echoes from the cavernous

openings in the cliffs.

He reached the eastern side of the dark mass of rocks, from the point of which the tide was slowly subsiding. The song had ceased, and a low moaning sound - the soughing of the wind passed along the shore. Walter trembled with fear, and was on the point of returning, when a most flute-like murmur rose from the other side of the rocky barrier, which was presently moulded into words

"From your couch of glistering pearl, Slowly, softly, come away; Our sweet earth-child, lovely girl,

Died this day,--died this day."

Memory told Walter that truly was it the anniversary of Selina Pennaluna's death, and to him every gentle wave falling on the shore sang, or murmured

"Died this day, died this day."

The sand was left dry around the- point of the rocks, and Walter impelled by a power which he could not control, walked onward. The moment he appeared on the western side of the rock, a wild laugh burst into the air, as if from the deep cavern before him, at the entrance of which sat the same beautiful being whom he had formerly met. There was now an expression of rare joy on her face, her eyes glistened with delight, and she extended her arms. as if to welcome him.

"Was it ever your wont to move so slowly towards your loved one?"

Walter heard it was Selina's voice. He saw it was Selina's features; but he was conscious it was not Selina's form.

"Come, sit beside me, Walter, and let us talk of love."

He sat down without a word, and looked into the maiden's face with a vacant expression of fondness. Presently she placed her hand upon his heart; a shudder passed through his frame; but having passed, he felt no more pain, but a rare intensity of delight. The maiden wreathed her arm around his neck, drew Walter towards her, and then he remembered how often he had acted thus towards Selina. She bent over him and looked into his eyes. In his mind's mirror he saw himself looking thus into the eyes of his betrayed one.

"You loved her once?" said the maiden.

"I did indeed," answered Walter, with a sigh.

"As you loved her, so I love you," said the maiden, with a smile which shot like a poisoned dart through Walter's heart. She lifted the young man's head lovingly between her hands, and bending over him, pressed her lips upon and kissed his forehead, Walter curiously felt that although he was the kissed, yet that he was the kisser.

"Kisses," she said, "are as true at sea as they are false on land. You men kiss the earth-born maidens to betray them. The kiss of a sea-child is the seal of constancy. You are mine till death."

"Death!" almost shrieked Walter.

A full consciousness of his situation now broke upon Walter. He had heard the tales of the gossips respecting the mermaid origin of Selina; but he had laughed at them as an idle fancy. he now felt they were true. For hours Walter was compelled to sit by the side of his beautiful tormentor, every word of assumed love and rapture being a torture of the most exquisite kind to him. He could not escape from the arms which were wound around him. He saw the tide rising rapidly. He heard the deep voice of the winds coming over the sea from the far west. He saw that which appeared at first as a dark mist, shape itself into a dense black mass of cloud, and rise rapidly over the starbedecked space above him. He saw by the brilliant edge of light which occasionally fringed the clouds that they were deeply charged with thunder. There was something sublime in the steady motion of the storm; and now the roll of the waves, which had been disturbed in the Atlantic, reached our shores, and the breakers fell thunderingly within a few feet of Walter and his companion. Paroxysms of terror shook him, and with each convulsion he felt himself grasped with still more ardour, and pressed so closely to the maiden's bosom, that he heard her heart dancing of joy.

At length his terrors gave birth to words, and he implored her to let him go.

"The kiss of the sea-child is the seal of constancy." Walter vehemently implored forgiveness. He confessed his deep iniquity. He promised a life of penitence.

"Give me back the dead," said the maiden bitterly, and she planted another kiss, which seemed to pierce his brain by its coldness, upon his forehead.

The waves rolled around the rock on which; they sat; they washed their seat. Walter was .still in the female's grasp, and she lifted him to a higher ledge. The storm approached. Lightnings struck down from the heavens into the sands; and thunders roared along the iron cliffs. The mighty waves grew yet more rash, and washed up to this strange pair, who now sat on the highest pinnacle of the pile of rocks. Walter's terrors nearly overcame him; but he was roused by a liquid stream of fire, which positively hissed by him, followed immediately by a crash of thunder, which shook the solid earth. Tom Chenall's cottage on the cliff burst into a blaze, and Walter saw, from his place amidst the raging waters, a crowd of male and female roisterers rush terrified out upon the heath, to be driven back by the pelting storm. The climax of horrors appeared to surround Walter. He longed to end it in death, but he could not die. His senses were quickened. He saw his wicked companion and evil adviser struck to the ground, a blasted heap of ashes, by a lightning stroke, and at the same moment he and his companion were borne off the rock on the top of a mountainous wave, on which he floated; the woman holding him by the hair of his head, and singing in a rejoicing voice, which was like a silver bell heard amidst the deep base bellowings of the storm -

"Come away, come away,
O'er the waters wild!
Our earth-born child
Died this day, died this day.
"Come away, come away!
The tempest loud
Weaves the shroud
For him who did betray.
"Come away, come away!
Beneath the wave

Lieth the grave
Of him we slay, him we slay.
"Come away, come away!
He shall not rest
In earth's own breast
For many a day, many a day.
"Come away, come away!
By billows to
From coast to coast,
Like deserted boat
His corpse shall float

Around the bay, around the bay."

Myriads of voices on that wretched night were heard amidst the roar of the storm. The waves were seen covered with a multitudinous host, who were tossing from one to the other the dying Walter Trewoofe, whose false heart thus endured the vengeance of the mermaid, who had, in the fondness of her soul, made the innocent child of humble parents the child of her adoption.

Several versions of the following story have been given me. The general idea of the tale belongs to the north coast; but the fact of mermaidens taking innocents under their charge was common around the Lizard, and in some of the coves near the Land's End.

from 'Popular Romances' by Robert Hunt Posted by Alex Langstone at 22:53

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Officials say they do not know whether the organisms are damaging the Jefferson Memorial, or even if they can be eradicated.

22:44, UK, Wednesday 10 August 2016



The Jefferson Memorial (left) in March 2016 and (right) in 2003

One of America's most revered memorials has been covered by a microbial film that is proving a monumental headache for officials.

Conservationists are at a loss for how to stop the organisms covering the once gleaming dome of the Jefferson Memorial in Washington DC.

The black biofilm became noticeable less than a decade ago, National Mall and Memorial Parks spokesperson Catherine Dewey told the Washington Post.

She said it had grown "immensely" in recent years.



The biofilm became noticeable less

One microbiologist told the newspaper she does not know whether the microbes are damaging the surface.

The Park Service is trying out different cleaning solutions to remove the bacteria.

But officials are unsure whether they can even stop the organisms coming back.

than a decade ago, say officials The white neoclassical structure was built 73 years ago to honour the nation's third president, the principal author of its Declaration of Independence.

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'Minor' radiation leak in FitzPatrick nuclear plant has gone unfixed for 4 years

By Tim Knauss | tknauss@syracuse.com | Follow on Twitter on August 16, 2016 at 2:16 PM, updated August 16, 2016 at 4:09 PM Syracuse.com



Fitzpatrick plant.JPG

A leak in the radwaste building at FitzPatrick nuclear plant has gone uncorrected for at least four years, federal regulators said. Credit: NRC (NRC)

- 'Minor' radiation leak in FitzPatrick nuclear plant has gone unfixed for 4 years
- Entergy hiring to fill job openings at FitzPatrick nuclear plant
- NY's nuke bailout was better spent on renewables (Your
- Inside the hardball tactics to save FitzPatrick: NY threatened to seize the nuke plant
- FitzPatrick nuclear plant lost 10 percent of workers before state bailout

SCRIBA, N.Y. – The owner of FitzPatrick nuclear plant has allowed highly radioactive waste to leak into a contained area

of the facility for at least four years, a safety violation that poses no risk to the public but might make it more difficult to decontaminate the site after the reactor closes.

The problem was cited in the most recent quarterly inspection report by federal safety regulators.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission said the accumulation of spilled radioactive waste in the basement of a building at FitzPatrick is of "very low safety significance" because it occurred in a locked, highly shielded area that is already highly radioactive.

"The bottom line is, we have been aware of this issue for some time, but it poses no immediate risks to any residents or the environment," said Neil Sheehan, speaking for the NRC.

Nevertheless, plant owner Entergy Corp.'s failure to address the leak is of "more than minor significance" because the company knew about the problem for at least four years, the NRC reported.

Nuclear plant owners are required to minimize the accumulation of residual radioactive waste in their plants, which can "greatly increase the cost and complexity of future decommissioning" after a reactor shuts down, according to the NRC.

Entergy officials today said they put off cleaning up the spill to avoid exposing workers to unnecessary radiation. They have made a robot to do the job instead, said Tammy Holden, speaking for Entergy.

"Cleanup of the area had not been conducted previously because we did not want to subject our employees to unnecessary radiation," Holden said. "We have fabricated a vacuum-type robot that will be used to remove the sludge. The removal is scheduled for this month."

The NRC inspection report issued Friday did not quantify how much waste has accumulated on the floor of the FitzPatrick radwaste building, or how it might impact the plant's decommissioning costs. The waste consists of beads and powdered resins from filters that are used to clean up reactor coolant, said Sheehan, of the NRC.

Nuclear safety expert David Lochbaum, of the Union of Concerned Scientists, said he agreed with the NRC that the leak was of "minor significance." It's not uncommon for water spills to occur inside radwaste buildings, leaving waste behind, he wrote in an email. Entergy should have cleaned up the spill because the building floor is not designed to act as a backup storage tank, Lochbaum said.

"It'll be fixed soon now that the NRC (has) shone a spotlight on it," he wrote. "Which will demonstrate that it could have been fixed long ago."

The Nine Mile Point Unit 1 reactor experienced a similar long-term spill of radiation waste during the 1980s that was worse than FitzPatrick's. Lochbaum said.

The NRC also criticized Entergy for mistakes during a January 2016 outage that resulted in two plant workers being unintentionally exposed to high radiation levels. Both workers were alerted by alarms from their radiation dose monitors and moved to safety without becoming overexposed, the NRC said.

The NRC is treating both issues raised in the inspection report as "non-cited violations." which means FitzPatrick will not face penalties or increased oversight because of them.

Entergy has agreed to sell the 850-megawatt nuclear plant to Exelon Corp., which operates the nearby Nine Mile Point nuclear facility. Until the sale was announced last week, Entergy had planned to shut FitzPatrick permanently when it ran out of fuel in January 2017.

Anti-nuclear activists said the NRC report should raise concerns about the aging FitzPatrick plant, which started operation in 1975.

"These violations highlight the ongoing dangers posed by the upstate nuclear reactors and the lax enforcement by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission," said Tim Judson, of the Nuclear Information and Resource Service. "Entergy has known that this highly radioactive waste spill is a problem for four years, but the NRC has not imposed any fines or other penalties."

The NRC rates FitzPatrick's general safety performance as "green" in all 17 categories monitored, the best of four color-coded ratings.

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Miss Cora Strayer's Private Detective Agency

http://paulreda.com/corastrayer/

Last Saturday, the following ad showed up in the Vintage Ads LJ community (holy shit yes, I still sometimes use Livejournal) and I immediately became enamored with it.



1908 ad

I am really into old ads and Chicago history, and the ad copy filled me with joy. I loved the idea of a female PI working the South Side of Chicago during the Progressive Era. My mind almost immediately started concocting stories and cases for her (historical fanfic? Is that a thing?). Cheating husbands, missing daughters, crooked alderman, maybe even a murder in the Stockyards. I was sure she had an affair with Upton Sinclair and her nemesis must have been H.H. Holmes.

I resolved to find out as much about her as I could. I never would have guessed that I would find so much and that she completely lived up to my

expectations. So here is a timeline and documentation of everything I could find out about her (or at least as much as I could while spending no money and "researching" from the comfort of my couch). I HIGHLY recommend you click the links and read the articles. They're amazing.

I'm glad I can share this with the rest of the internet, feel free to hit me up via email or twitter with any comments, questions, or extra information you might have.

1869 -

Cora M. Strayer is the oldest of 4 children born to farmers Frank and Mahala Strayer in Elkhart, Indiana.

1885 -

At age 17, Cora marries a man named George W. Murray in Elkhart. I can't find anything else about this guy.

1885-1898 -

Sometime in here George dies. The 1890 census would be really helpful figuring out if he was still alive and what their location was that year, but almost all of the data was destroyed in a fire in 1921. In the 1910 census Cora lists herself as widowed, and as having given birth to two children, both of whom were no longer living. A "George Murry" who's in the right age range, did die in 1894 in Pierceton, IN, which is only 40 miles from Elkhart.

1898 -

Miss Cora Strayer is living at 3819 Wabash in Chicago. She lists her job as "Clerk."

1902 -

The first ad for her detective agency appears! It's at 5453 W Lake - a 4-room apartment with \$18 a month rent. The apartment is above a tavern that was consistently being raided by the cops for it's illegal poker room and bookmaking operations.

Aug 1903 -

Cora is profiled in the *Chicago Tribune* under the matter-of-fact headline "Woman Directs A Detective Bureau". In it she claims that she originally studied law and practiced as an attorney for several years.

1905 -

The first big ad in the Chicago city directory, complete with photo! Cora has moved to 3104 Cottage Grove, and a George S. Holben is named as the "Supt. of the Criminal Dept." In 1903 Holben was involved in a robbery where his landlady accused him of drugging her and stealing \$750 worth of diamonds. Several weeks later, the diamonds were still missing, but Holben was not prosecuted. I don't know if Holben was working for Cora yet when this all went down.

Apr 12, 1906 -

Mahala Strayer dies at age 60. Her address is on Cottage Grove not far from Cora, so I assume her and Frank moved to Chicago at some point.

1907 -

Cora is hired by a Mrs. Campbell who believes that a Mrs. Harris is writing fake letters in order to make it look like she is having an affair with Dr. Harris and so she may blackmail her. Cora takes Mrs. Harris on a trip to Milwaukee, gets her drunk on \$150 of fine wines, and steals the letters when she is passed out. Turns out Mrs. Campbell and Dr. Harris actually were having an affair and he performed an abortion on her. Mr. Campbell eventually killed Dr. Harris.

1905-1912 -

During this time ads for Miss Cora M. Strayer's Private Detective Agency appear consistently in both the *Chicago Tribune* and the "Blue Pages." I'm guessing business is going pretty well.

July 1908 -

George Holben has lost his diamond lapel button, and he lists his address as the same as Cora's.

1908 -

The ad with the awesome copy. "Ladies, when in need of legal or confidential advice, why not confer with one of your own sex?" She's found a niche! Also, I'm calling bullshit on this "Est in 1890" claim. I can't find any record of the agency before 1902, and going from a 16 year old girl married in Elkhart, to a 21 year old single attorney/detective in Chicago seems like a pretty whirlwind ride for a woman of the time.

1909 -

"Business Women Who Have Made a Success of Bossing Men" - Cora is one of the subjects of a full-page article in the Sunday Tribune about female business owners. In it we learn that Holben was her first employee and that she is moving her office. The article also features a photograph of her and Holben in the office.

1910 -

In the 1910 census, Cora lists herself as widowed, but living with George Holben at 2838 Indiana Ave, she is 41 and he is 34. Also in the household is Hanna Newberg, a 29 year old Swedish immigrant. Cora lists her profession as "Detective" and George is a "Journalist".

Dec 5, 1910 -

George Holben is shot and killed by Stephen Ayers, a 33 year old disgruntled ex-employee of the agency. Ayers claims that he met Cora in Seattle over the summer and that they traveled along the west coast with each other. He says that Cora invited him to Chicago with with promises of a job and marriage, but that she was being held hostage by Holben. Cora denies any love affair and says that she ordered Ayers fired due to unreliability. The murder even gets coverage in Los Angeles. Ayers is later sentenced to 15 years, and in 1913 he escapes from prison, but was caught two days later.

1912 -

George Holben is no longer listed on the ads.

1911-1912 -

At some point here Cora marries a man named Robert L. Fortune. He works in real estate. Cora is 43 and Fortune is 24, continuing her penchant for younger men.

Feb 19, 1913 -

Robert Fortune dies. According to his death certificate he had oral cancer ("sarcoma of the fauces and palate") and a contributing factor was "exhaustion following a number of operations for removal of growths." I'm guessing all these treatments led to Cora's later bankruptcy. (*Thanks Christopher Wilde for finding the cert.!*)

Oct 1913 -

Cora files for bankruptcy and is over \$9000 in debt. I just realized that all the men connected to her ended up dead before the age of 40, how sad.

1914 -

"Colonel" Cora Strayer forms the First Volunteer Women's Calvary Regiment to take up arms and join the fight in the Border War with Mexico. The killer quote from her:

"Do you want to wait until all the men are killed to do your duty, sisters? A woman that would stand and let a man do all the fighting and suffering for his country is not a soldier. She belongs in the effete ranks of those who hurry abroad when the trouble starts. Pooh! She is not even worthy of the ballot."

Apr 1914 -

The regiment has 100 women.

May 1914 -

200 women.

1918 -

Cora is hired by the friends of a Mrs. Russell, who think her husband is having an affair. She is joined on a stakeout by police, who want to bring up Mr. Russell and his mistress on morals charges. The situation culminates in a car chase up Lake Shore Drive with Cora in pursuit behind the wheel of her black sedan. The ensuing case receives big coverage. Also, check out the awesome Wurlitzer ad on that page. They're "sanitary" records!

1920 -

In the 1920 census Cora is still living at 2838 Indiana, but her retired father Frank has now moved in with her.

May 1923 -

The office has moved to 4933 S. Michigan Ave.

Apr 13, 1927 -

Frank Strayer dies in Chicago.

1930 -

On her 1930 census form Cora lists herself as "Cora Fortune". She says she is 61 years old, a widow, and can read and write. She pays \$40 a month in rent. She is still working, owns her own business, and declares her profession to be "Investigator".

Dec 1930 -

This is the last ad I can find for the agency. The office is now at 5834 S Wentworth. (*Thanks to Brian Wolf for hooking me up with access to old Tribunes*).

Dec 19, 1932 -

Cora May Strayer Fortune dies in Chicago. She was 64.

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Monk Inspection Team Exposes 600 Impostors in China

sputniknews.com 2016-08-18T16:09:00Z



Khurul Golden Abode of Buddha Shakyamuni

Asia & Pacific

An inspection group of 10 monks helped to expose more than 600 crooks described as monks at the sacred mountain Wutai in China.

Since March 2016, the inspection team exposed more than 600 impostors and confiscated about 500 pieces of monk clothing, Xinhua news agency reported.

Members of the team wear special badges, conduct regular patrols and random spot checks.

The inspection team claims that they know local monks well and do not question them. Strangers, on the other hand, are asked to show documents and provide details of their visit. If they do not have a special "Buddhist certificate", inspectors take their monk clothing and report the incident to the police.

Wutai mountain is one of the sacred Chinese mountains of Buddhism. It is located in the district of Xinzhou City, Shanxi Province. Millions of tourists and pilgrims visit the sacred mountain in a year.

The place is also famous among monks-impostors, who predicted destiny for money or cry for alms.

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Monkey In Diaper Attacks Walmart Employee

huffingtonpost.com

This story is bananas.

A diaper-wearing monkey was photographed running around the parking lot of a Walmart in Lancaster, Ohio, and attacking an employee.

Police said the pampered primate escaped when its owner opened her RV trailer door, according to the Lancaster Eagle Gazette.

A store employee's attempt to capture the monkey near the shopping cart return area was caught on tape by bystander Richelle Stewart.

When the man got close, the monkey jumped from the metal railing and grabbed the employee's arm and clothing, the tape shows.

The woman who owns the monkey yelled, "Let him go, let him go, let him go! If he bites you, they will put him down."

The woman then grabbed the monkey's hand and walked it back to the RV, according to WTVR.com.

A witness called 911 reporting that the monkey had bitten the employee, KSN.com reports. However, two news organizations reported that the victim did not require medical attention.

A Walmart spokesperson told NBC4i.com that the monkey's owner was grateful for the way the store helped apprehend her animal.

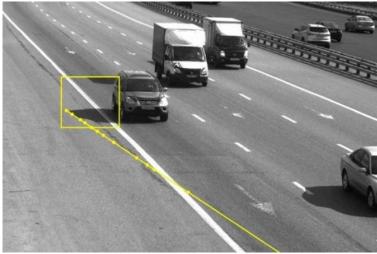
The website said the Ohio Department of Agriculture is now trying to track down the monkey and its owner for fear the animal may not be properly registered.

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Moscow driver fined for shadow of his car

29.08.2016 | Source: Pravda.Ru pravdareport.com





Moscow driver fined for shadow of his car. 58720.jpeg

Source: drive2.ru/d2boy

In Moscow, a driver received a fine for crossing a full-line. However, the photo made by traffic cameras showed that the vehicle was traveling without any violation of traffic rules.

The man could not understand the reason, for which he was fined. Having studied the traffic cam photo

in detail, he realized that it was the shadow of his vehicle that crossed the full line.

"Cameras want us to pay fines even if car shadows violate traffic rules," the man wrote on drive2.ru website.

The "violation" occurred on August 25 on the Moscow Ring Road (MKAD). The man has already submitted a complained to the traffic police and is awaiting a response.

Pravda.Ru

Read article on the Russian version of Pravda.Ru

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Library repels youth with sound

stuff GLENN MCCONNELL

Last updated 17:56, August 30 2016



STACY SQUIRES/FAIRFAX NZ The noise from a device used to deter mosquitoes from Christchurch's Papanui Library is having an unintended effect on teens.



STACY SQUIRES/FAIRFAX NZ The noise can be uncomfortable to youth if they spend any length of time nearby, the city council says.



STACY SQUIRES/FAIRFAX NZ Students from Papanui High School walk past the library on the way to and from school, each day.

A mysterious high-pitched sound used to deter mosquitoes is unintentionally driving teenagers away from a Christchurch library too.

The sound, only detectable by young ears, can be heard by the doors and in the foyer of Christchurch's Papanui library.

Christchurch City Council acting head of libraries Erica Rankin said the sound was beamed from a \$1350 "mosquito device".

"The mosquito device emits a noise that is undetectable by adults and proves uncomfortable to youth if they spend any length of time in close proximity. The alarm is on all the time."

Papanui High School student Lexie Narbey, 16, said that while the sound was annoying, it had no effect on her.

Narbey, whose school is across the road from the library, said the library was a popular spot for students who had "literally nothing to do".

On the way to and from school, Narbey said conversations were often interrupted by the piercing sound, some of her friends could not hear it at all.

Fights were a weekly affair inside and outside the library, and the sound did nothing to stop them, she said. If people talked loud enough, the sound was drowned out.

Youth from "other hoods" would look for fights outside the library, she said. Some of the fighters, who Narbey thought were in their teens and early 20s, had been banned from the library and nearby mall.

Penny Prescott, of the Canterbury Youth Workers Collective, said areas such as the New Brighton library and old bus

exchange faced similar problems, but these issues were allayed through new activities to engage youth.



SUPPLIED The Christchurch bus interchange is an example of "youth relevant design," says youth worker Penny Prescott.

Prescott suggested the Papanui library hire youth workers or add activities and areas of interest to young people.

The New Brighton library hired a security guard from April to June. Prescott said their role became unnecessary when the library opted to hire a social worker.

The new bus interchange was an example of "youth friendly design", with its open design and proximity to affordable food outlets making youth were happier and less likely to cause havoc, she said.

- The Press

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WELCOME TO PICTON - The Most Haunted Town In Australia -

cvltnation.com



Meghan 2016-08-16 MeghanAugust 16, 2016

Every town has its ghost stories and haunted spots. **Picton** is a little different... this town has more apparent haunted areas than anywhere else I'd ever been. I usually seek these places out, but in Picton they are unavoidable. Picton is the most haunted town in Australia. This isn't



a self-proclaimed title either – Picton has earned that title. A ghost story sticks out in almost in every corner of the town. I went there to visit my new girlfriend's family who still live in the area; this is where she grew up. I wanted to know more, so we went exploring.

Europeans first explored the area in 1798, although legal settlement didn't occur until 1821. Governor Macquarie authorized the building of the new Great South Road between

Sydney and the Southern Highlands in 1819. This opened up the Picton area to new settlers. Further development occurred in 1863 when the railway arrived. The town was originally called "Stonequarry" up until 1841, the town was renamed "Picton" in 1845. Picton became an important stopping point along the Great South Road. This eventually became the Hume Highway. The town was bypassed in 1980. The town of Picton also turned out to be the first town the family on my mother's side settled into after an Irish convict was sentenced to life in Australia for murder.

The Picton Tunnel



Picton_Mushroom_Tunnel

Stories of Paranormal activity abound in the township of Picton, but the old Picton tunnel built in 1867 – originally known as the Redbank Range Railway tunnel – seems to be the focus of activity. This tunnel was apparently used to store mustard gas spray tanks and ammunition during World War II. It was also used as a mushroom farm, and is still known today as the Mushroom tunnel by locals.

Stories of suicide are linked with the tunnel, and the tragic railway accident of the woman named **Emily Bollard** appears to be the basis of the haunted reputation of the tunnel. Apparently, when the tunnel was still in use by the railway, Emily had been walking through it and was killed by an oncoming locomotive. It is unclear whether she

deliberately committed suicide or if her death was just an unfortunate accident. The apparition of Emily has been seen in the depths of the tunnel. When she appears, it is as a white flowing figure of a woman with no face. From time to time, black shadows or figures have been seen on the walls throughout the tunnel. Some witnesses have reported white lights hovering above people's heads and figures appearing out of the darkness. Ghostly children have been witnessed and electrical disturbances have occurred to devices in the tunnel. People have also felt sudden drops in temperature.

One story once told to me by a friend details a ghost train that haunts the tunnel. He told me he and his non-believing uncles toured one of the now defunct tours of Picton. When they reached the tunnel, he said suddenly they noticed this light in the distance. The sound of a steam train overwhelmed the tunnel. He said everyone, including the tour guide, screamed "get up against the walls" – remember, this tunnel has been inactive for almost 50 years at this time. He claims he felt the wind on his face as he closed his eyes and the train passed.

The Cemetery



Picton_Anglican_Church

Local houses surround **St Marks Cemetery**; during the day, this place is just like any other cemetery. At night, however, many people have reported paranormal sightings. The main one being of **Blanche Moon**, an 11 year old who died in 1886 and who haunts the yard. Blanche was the daughter of Henry and Fanny Moon – her father was thought to have been the timber worker who may have helped make the railway sleepers she fell off of while playing with the other children, the fall which lead to her death.

In January 2010, a family visiting St Mark's Cemetery in Picton snapped a photo apparently

showing the ghosts of two children who died almost 60 years apart. The photo appeared in major newspapers across the country. The children were believed to be Blanche Moon and David Shaw, the son of a minister who died in 1946 from polio. The family claim that there were no children in the cemetery at the time the photo was taken, and that the figures of the two were only noticed when the pictures were downloaded to a computer.



ahosts

Other places in Picton rumored to be haunted are:

Razorback Inn: The Inn is the subject of many spooky stories and the home of a very noisy ghost.

Imperial Hotel: Many staff report the feeling of someone following them through several parts of the building. At times, the jukebox begins to play even though it was not connected to power.

Wendover House: Built in 1880 by John Wright McQuiggin. A former resident claims to have been

visited several times by the ghost of McQuiggan, whom he recognized from an old photograph.

Maternity Hospital: The sound of crying babies and the ghost of an unpleasant matron have been seen by residents; others claim to have been woken up in the middle of the night by invisible hands wrapped around their throats.

Wollondilly Shire Hall: The hall is reported to be haunted by three ghosts – a bearded man wearing a hat and suit, a small mischievous boy, and a little girl, who is most often heard rather than seen.

Stonequarry Viaduct: Over the years, many people have drowned in the creek. Locals have heard ghoulish sounds of people swimming and splashing in the creek.

Emmett Cottages: The ghost of a woman is seen in the window of the building, and shop owners often find their displays have been moved overnight.

Queen Victoria Hospital (Old building): Buzzers are still going off, even though they have been disconnected for years. Any nurse who has worked in that building has a story, from children crying and singing, to shadowy figures, footsteps, and extreme cold sickening feelings in certain sections.

Meghan

1 Comment on "WELCOME TO PICTON - The Most Haunted Town In Australia"

Nicholas Wilder 19 days 21 hours ago

Even if ghosts existed they wouldn't hang out in that shithole

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Mum 'terminates "mermaid" pregnancy after discovering child had grown tail'

19:25, 11 Aug 2016 Updated 22:55, 11 Aug 2016 By Keyan Milanian

mirror.co.uk

Doctors at the hospital told Wu that the foetus was suffering from a rare condition known as sirenomelia, or "Mermaid Syndrome"

A young woman terminated her pregnancy after six months when doctors told her she was carrying a mermaid-like foetus, it has been reported.

The 23-year-old took the drastic action after a scan at the Health Care Center for Women and Children in Yichang City, in Central China's Hubei Province.

Scans showed the foetus had developed a 'tail-like growth' but no legs.

It also did not have a bladder and had a stunted liver, reports said.



The mum had gone for a scan, like this one Doctors at the Health Care Center for Women and Children in Yichang City, in Central China's Hubei Province, broke the news to Wu

Doctors at the hospital told mother 'Wu' the foetus was suffering from a rare condition known as sirenomelia, or "Mermaid Syndrome".

It is a rare congenital deformity in which the legs are fused together, giving them the appearance of a mermaid's tail.

Wu decided to terminate her pregnancy after specialists estimated that the baby would only survive for a few hours after birth.

The causes behind Mermaid Syndrome are still a medical mystery and it is said to occur only once in every 100,000 pregnancies.

Shiloh Pepin, an American dubbed "Mermaid Girl", suffered one of the world's most welldocumented cases of sirenomelia.



Getty

Shiloh Pepin, an American dubbed "Mermaid Girl", suffered one of the world's most well-documented cases of sirenomelia Milagros Cerron, another child born with sirenomelia, later underwent a successful operation to separate her legs

Despite undergoing 150 operations during her relatively short lifetime, she still passed away in 2009 at the age of 10.

According to reports, there are only two known survivors of Mermaid Syndrome in the world today.

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Reuters

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Was this meditating '200-year-old' mummified monk STILL ALIVE when he was found?

express.co.uk

A 200-YEAR old mummified mongolian monk was "still alive" in a hibernation-like state when he was found sat in the lotus position, according to a friend of the Dalai Lama.

By Jon Austin Jon Austin

PUBLISHED: 06:10, Wed, Aug 24, 2016 | UPDATED: 07:17, Wed, Aug 24, 2016



YOUTUBE

The monk was still upright in the lotus position and some said

The wizened monk, found in Songinokhairkhan province of Mongolia, was in a deep spiritual meditative state known as "tukdam", according to Dr Barry Kerzin, a well known Buddhist monk and a physician to the Dalai Lama.

Over a number a years, a number of other mummified meditators have been found from China to India as the Buddhist monks attempted to turn into a Buddha themselves through prolonged meditation.

Gautama Buddha, or simply the Buddha,

was a sage upon whose teachings Buddhism was founded.

He is believed to have lived in the eastern part of Ancient India sometime between the sixth and fourth centuries BC.

Statues of the Buddha in the lotus position are a central part of the Buddhist religion.

In India alone, over the last 50 years there are said to have been about 40 such cases of meditating Tibetan monks found mummified.

Some have even been found encased in metal Buddhas by their peers, as this entombment was supposed to aid along the divine process.



YouTube

From the rear, with a full head of hair, he could pass as a meditating monk.

On this occasion, the Lama found in the lotus position had actually been stolen and was destined for sale on the black market.

Many in the community where he was found, covered in cattle skin, claimed he was one step away from becoming a Buddha before being disturbed by a thief.

Dr Barry Kerzin, a famous Buddhist monk and a physician to the Dalai Lama, said: "I had the privilege to take care of some meditators who were in a tukdam state.

"If the person is able to remain in this state for more than three weeks - which rarely happens - his body gradually shrinks, and in the end all that remains from the person is his hair, nails, and clothes.

"Usually in this case, people who live next to the monk see a rainbow that glows in the sky for several days.



YouTube

If the person is able to remain in this state for more than three weeks - which rarely happens - his body gradually shrinks, and in the end all that remains from the person is his hair, nails, and clothes.

Dr Barry Kerzin

"This means that he has found a 'rainbow body'. This is the highest state close to the state of Buddha.

"If the meditator can continue to stay in this meditative state, he can become a Buddha.

"Reaching such a high spiritual level the meditator will also help others, and all the people around will feel a deep sense of joy".

But, forensic examinations now completed on the meditating monk found on January 27, may have laid to rest the whole "tukdam" myth, as well as this

individual.

Tests since carried out at the National Centre of Forensic Expertise at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia's capital, found that the mummified monk was well and truly dead.

He was found to be Tsorzh Sanzhzhav, who died aged around 70 around 130 years ago, meaning he would have been close to 200 had he still been in hibernation as claimed.

He was also a disciple of Ovgon Geser Lama, a Buddhist teacher revered highly in the region.

He had been buried alongside his master, but the mummy was stolen from the grave in a mountain cave.

Investigators travelled to Sodnomdarzhaa Mountain, 30 miles from Tsakhir in the Arkhangai district, where they found the tomb, still containing the body of the Geser Lama.

The Geser Lama died in about 1890 while meditating in the lotus position like his student.

The body was cleaned and embalmed and his resting place became a shrine.

The remains of Tsorzh Sanzhzhav have been returned to the grave.

Lead researcher Ganhugiyn Purevbata, founder and professor of the Mongolian Institute of Buddhist Art at Ulaanbaatar Buddhist University, said a more secure structure and shrine is being built there to try to prevent further thefts.

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A compendium of information, resources and discussion on notable nineteenth century American murders.

Saturday, August 13, 2016

The Murder of Chong Ong.

Little Murders



The murderer identified.

The basement of the building on the corner of Spring and Wooster Streets in New York City, housed the Restaurant Cubana, run by a former cigarmaker named Antonio Soloa. It was very popular among the Cubans and others in the neighborhood looking for a good inexpensive meal—Soloa's specialty was ham fried with spice and garlic and served with vegetables.

On November 2, 1885, Thomas Daly, a produce vendor, entered the Restaurant Cubana to see if Soloa needed any provision and found him lying dead on the floor of the restaurant in a pool of blood. He fled from the place but went back down with Wooster Street coal dealer James Caughlin. Butchered, was how they described the body to the police. His face and the right side of his temple had been crushed, his shirt had been slashed open and his chest stabbed through his undershirt. Blood had spurted high enough to stain the ceiling. A closer examination revealed nine stabs to the chest, severing two ribs. A knife with a ten inch blade, bent and bloody, lay on the floor near the body. The coroner later discovered that one of the stabs had severed Soloa's heart.

In Soloa's bedroom, his trunk had been rummaged by someone with bloody fingers. The police found a cheap leather pocketbook empty on the floor. Theft was believed to be the motive.

But Antonio Soloa was a complicated man and the police changed their assessment when they learned that, although he had come to New York from Cuba, Soloa was actually Chinese. His real name was Chong Ong. This fact, together with the severity of the attack, led police to believe that the true motive was revenge and that the murder was committed by highbinders, the hitmen of Chinese secret societies.

The victim was living alone at the time of the murder, but had previously lived for five years with a German woman named Susie Vestreg. She said that he had saved several hundred dollars and she believed that he was murdered for his money. Regardless of his heritage, it was clear that Antonio Soloa saw himself as Cuban, not Chinese. He had taken a Spanish name, wore western clothes and had worked as a cigarmaker prior to opening a Cuban restaurant. None of this impressed the police. To the police and the press he was Chong Ong victim of Chinese revenge. The Chinese consulate in New York provided resources to find the killer and defrayed the cost of burying Chong Ong in the Chinese section of Evergreen Cemetery.

The investigation took another turn when William Schimper, who owned a store across Wooster Street from Restaurant Cubana, went to the police with his hired boy, George Manz. Manz told police that he had been outside, around fifteen minutes before the body was discovered and saw a tall Cuban man with a scar on his face run up the stairs followed by Chong Ong. The Cuban drew a big knife, thrust it into Ong's breast, and seemed to have difficulty drawing it out. Then the Cuban ran down to the basement again, Ong turned to follow him but fell headlong down the stairs. After overcoming his fear, George Manz told his employer what he saw and they went together to the police.

Detective Sergeant Haley, who was assigned to the case, took Manz to several factories in the city where Cubans were known to be employed, but Manz recognized none of them. The police now had the co-operation of the Spanish Consulate as well who provided information about Cubans in the city and vessels leaving the city for the West Indies. Haley talked to a group of Cuban insurrectionists at their lodge room on the west side of the city. There he saw a group photograph of the lodge members; he obtained a copy and showed it to George Manz. "That is the man," Manz said, pointing to a face in the picture, "and if you get him you will find he has an ugly scar on his cheek."

Haley learned that the man's name was Augustine Rebell and he worked at a Brooklyn cigar factory. He did, indeed, have a large white scar down the side of his face, that had been inflicted a year earlier by an Irishwoman with whom he was living. He later spent some time in the Tombs for assaulting her. Rebell was arrested and taken to police headquarters, George Manz was brought to the station where he identified Rebell in person as the man who murdered Chong Ong.

Inspector Thomas Byrnes, Chief of Detectives, praised Haley's work but suspected that Rebell would have a good alibi ready and conviction would be difficult. Rebell denied any knowledge of Chong Ong's murder. He had been at the factory that day and was credited on the books with making 100 cigars that day. His foreman, however, said Rebell could have made that many in half a day. The police claimed that they had additional evidence that could not be used in court because the witnesses were afraid to let it be known that they assisted the police.

Two cigarmakers came forward and, through an interpreter, told police that the murder had been a continuation of a fight between Rebell and Ong a week earlier, over money Rebell owed Ong. They said it was an open secret among cigarmakers that Rebell was the killer but no one was ready to betray him because he had friends among the Cuban revolutionists.

The Cuban community in New York rallied around Rebell, securing counsel and making sure all his needs were met while incarcerated. His employer, Mr. Jarequi, called Rebell a man of excellent character and said the scar on Rebell's face was the only reason for his arrest. Some claimed that Rebell was not the man in the phototograph. Many of his friends and coworkers also spoke well of Rebell. Jarequi and other workers at the cigar factory were ready to testify that Rebell was at the factory all day.

It is not clear how the matter was finally resolved. The district attorney probably decided that there was not enough evidence against Rebell to prosecute him. No one was ever tried for the murder of Chong Ong, alias Antonio Soloa.

Sources:

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- "The Murder Of Chong Ong." New York Tribune 21 Nov 1885.
- Posted by Robert Wilhelm

1 comments:

mycatisaudrey says: August 14, 2016 at 2:54 AM

Whether Rebell committed the murder or not, he still lived up to his name!

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Skinned, Boiled and Fed to the Children: The Murder of John Price - cvltnation.com

http://www.cvltnation.com/skinned-boiled-fed-children-murder-john-price/

CVLT T NATION

Floyd 2016-09-01 Floyd September 1, 2016 51 0

The Silverwater Women's Correctional Facility has one inmate that is like no other. In 2001, one of the most gruesome murders



in the history of
Australia occurred.
Katherine Mary
Knight was the
first woman in
Australia to be
sentenced to life
imprisonment, with
her file marked
"never to be
released."

An abattoir worker from the Hunter

Valley, NSW, Knight had an obsession with knives. This obsession led her to, on March 1st 2001, stab her then de facto partner John Price 37 times. Earlier that day, Katherine had bought new black lingerie. Price returned home after being away because of a previous fight to find that Knight had sent the kids to their friend's house for a sleepover. Price sat and watched TV, had a shower and went to sleep. Katherine woke Price up with her new sexy negligee on and they engaged in intercourse. Price then fell asleep.



r7_0_1537_861_w1200_h678_fmax

He awoke after being stabbed multiple times. Terrified, he ran down the hall, leaving bloody handprints on the walls. He made it to the front of the house, almost escaping, spewing blood all

over the screen door. Knight, however, had a much more sinister plan. Her motive was revenge for constantly leaving her with the kids, but Knight also derived a sick pleasure from Price's death.

Several hours after Price had been killed, Knight skinned him as she'd learned how to in the abattoir. The skin was hung on a meat hook on the architrave of a door to the lounge room. She then decapitated him and cooked parts of his body, serving up the meat with baked potato, pumpkin, zucchini, cabbage, yellow squash and gravy in settings at the dinner table. Notes were also placed beside each plate of food, each having the name of one of Price's children on it; she was preparing to serve his body parts to the children.

Police intervened before the children got home from school. They observed that the victim's head was boiling in a pot on the stovetop, and that he had attempted to escape. There were bloodstains



John-Price-Katheri 2755939a



r0_3_1200_678_w1200_h678_fmax

on the floor and walls of the house. During sentencing, Justice Barry O'Keefe said Price would have suffered immeasurably.

Video footage of the crime scene is locked away for good. So horrific are the contents, it's believed anyone who views the tapes would forever be damaged. The police officers who had the misfortune of being first at the scene have complained, years later, of still being affected by the horrors they saw; one officer endured years of therapy to try to wipe the visions from his head. Another,

> Detective Bob Wells, who was called to the crime scene, said "it's an image that I'm still trying to come to grips with today."



Floyd 51

Comments on "Skinned, Boiled and Fed to the Children: The Murder of John Price"

I'm gonna start a grind band called Potatoes and the first album is gonna be called "Skinned, Boiled, and fed to the children"

Nico Wussy 3 days 6 hours ago

Pibe Nue spiral awaits

Ste Wilcock 3 days 8 hours ago

Whas the episode called please

Derek Jelsma 3 days 9 hours ago Michael Edvard Oynes

Pablo Reyes 3 days 10 hours ago

The original outback steak house

Ryanna Scrundy 3 days 10 hours ago

shits crazy

Atziri Anaya 3 days 12 hours ago

Anaya Gutierrez Miguel Aaron

Atziri Anaya 3 days 11 hours ago

nope, but the whole feeding the dad to her kids was interesting

Anaya Gutierrez Miguel Aaron 3 days 11 hours ago

Still not as bad as Albert Fisher.

Seana Kamp 3 days 13 hours ago

Jay

Alan Beanz 3 days 14 hours ago

Andy M Cannon

Santi S Iñiguez 3 days 14 hours ago

Skinned, boiled and ALMOST fed to the children.

James Williams-Vales 3 days 14 hours ago

Yawn. Stabbing, mutilation, boring lol

Rick B. Rázuri 3 days 15 hours ago

Alan, el de la foto no es Toñyn?

Alan Lester Perez

3 days 13 hours ago

Hahahaha justo cuando esta en ..ehhh ajaaammm esteeeee...

Tony Esposito 3 days 16 hours ago Sara Slaughter 3 days 16 hours ago

...and here I am expecting a photo or two.

Mauricio Mendez 3 days 16 hours ago

Shiiit

João Martin Jr 3 days 17 hours ago

Thiago Vakka

| - ShareMickey Marie3 days 17 hours ago

Listen to the Casefile podcast episode about this woman...so terrifying

| - ShareRobert Payton3 days 18 hours ago

Rob Nicola

| - ShareAdam Cser3 days 18 hours ago

Máthé Brigitta

| - ShareWane Oneightytwo3 days 18 hours ago

i need the video...

| - ShareLauren Hewitt3 days 19 hours ago

Sam Audet

l - Share

Eloise Lucretia Melissa Howlett 3 days 19 hours ago

The book about Katherine Knight (and this crime) is disturbing reading, but I am glad I read it.

I - Share

Eloise Lucretia Melissa Howlett 3 days 8 hours ago

Beyond Bad. I think the author was Sandra Lee.

| - Share

Vicky Farrell

3 days 17 hours ago

What is the book called?

| - Share

Robert Coughlin

3 days 19 hours ago

That article sucks balls..... High school horror....at best. Anyone who reads Cvlt .. whatever...is usually pretty jaded....let's keep it 100. Come at us harder then that fluff.

| - Share

Carson Byrd

3 days 13 hours ago

Let's keep it 100? Are you a 17 year old girl?

Out here saying 100 and yet you're calling people jaded

| - Share

Đorđe Skorupan

zucchini? that woman is crazy!

| - Share

Naomi Coronel

3 days 19 hours ago

Manuel Kriegsherr

| - Share

Manuel Kriegsherr

3 days 14 hours ago

Interesting...:)

| - Share

Fernando Castro

3 days 19 hours ago

Magda

| - ShareMagda Mendes3 days 19 hours ago

Nhamy

Margaret Abbott 3 days 19 hours ago

Vincent Houde

Matthew Aaron Ashcroft 3 days 20 hours ago

Laura Marie

Rhys Ware 3 days 20 hours ago

Sandy Duncan Macpherson

Andrew Thompson 3 days 20 hours ago

Ashleigh Rycen from NSW...your favorite right?

Ashleigh Rycen 3 days 17 hours ago

Always knew there was a reason i never warmed to that side of the border lol

Karen Challinor 3 days 20 hours ago

Shaan Johari a scene from one of your horror movies. No wonder the cops were freaked out

Chris Zahrobsky 3 days 20 hours ago

brutal

Cameron Overend 3 days 20 hours ago

Simön, a headline like that just makes me want to see it so bad.

Simön Greentree 3 days 19 hours ago

Katherine Knight. Nuckin' Futs. Doesn't really cover it.

Alex Grey 3 days 21 hours ago Jade Elizabeth 3 days 21 hours ago

Your mate Sarah

Zdravko Lovrić 3 days 21 hours ago

Straya!

Clint Willis
3 days 21 hours ago

Insane

Melodie Lynn 3 days 21 hours ago

Crazy!

Davey Slattery 3 days 21 hours ago

Don Karlito Kamino 3 days 21 hours ago

Robbielara Oya Ade

Robbielara Oya Ade 3 days 3 hours ago

Yes. And more. Could you imagine all the kiddies come from school/ eating their delightful gruel/then getting that it's uncool?... To eat their dad/... by the way, desert's still cooking. Lol

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stuff It appears the residents of Wadestown and Ngaio may have got to the root of a mystery bang that had many thinking the worst last week.

That bang - likened, among others, to a "plane crashing" - had a good number of people in the Wellington suburbs scrambling around in their pyjamas early Tuesday morning to discover the cause and to see if anyone needed help.

For all the big disasters imagined, the noise may have far more earthly roots, though.



Turei Reedy Might this tree have caused residents in Wadestown and Ngaio to sit upright in their beds last week?

Highland Cres resident Turei Reedy said he believed he had got to bottom of the mystery and that the almighty bang was nothing more than a tree that had fallen over and rumbled down a hill.

Reedy and his neighbours spent part of the weekend investigating, and said they found a tree lying at the bottom of a gully between his street and Oban Street.

It had split in half, and part of it had slid down the hill, taking bush with it.

"It's a medium size tree and doesn't look like it should have caused so much noise, but noise echoes in the gully," he said.

Reedy said he was glad to know it wasn't a disaster or a crashed UFO, like some residents had speculated.

At the time it had sounded to him like a "house going down a hill or a petrol tanker blowing up".

Authorities were equally baffled by the noise. A KiwiRail spokeswoman said last week it was not train-related, while Wellington Region emergency management adviser Kerry McSaveney confirmed a 111 call was made "about a loud bang made at 12.09am but there was no action or any further information from the Fire Service.

McSaveney said she was "pretty sure if anything had blown up or collapsed, the Fire Service would have been on it."

- Stuff

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

Phone0800 697 8833

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Mysterious 'evil goblins' capture woman and keep her in a cave

14:20, 26 Aug 2016 Updated 14:20, 26 Aug 2016 By Keyan Milanian

mirror.co.uk



Woman says she was kidnapped by goblins and held hostage for five days

A woman has claimed she was captured by goblins who kept her captive in a cave for five days.

The woman, named only as Jasmina, told a Nicaraguan TV station the evil gnomes had lured her away from her home in Monte Oscuro, in west Nicaragua, as a child.

And she claims she then spent six nights holed up in a hill cave.

She said: "They appeared one day when I was playing and they took me away.

"They were playing with me and they

used this to lure me away towards the hill . They put me in a cave and they kept me there for five days and six niahts."



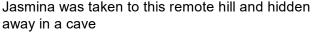
Canal 10

Jasmina claims she was kidnapped by goblins who kept her in a cave The goblins are said to be a serious problem in the rural region of Nicaragua

According to the news report, Jasmina was eventually rescued by her family after they took advice from a local 'witch'.

She was found by a search team in a cave where, 15 years earlier, another victim had been ' abducted ' and found.

According to people living in the area, the goblins or fairies live among many of the Nicaraguan indigenous communities.



A search team eventually found her in a cave where, 15 years earlier, another victim had been 'abducted' and found

The cave was used by the goblins to keep Jasmina captive

One local said: "Currently there are many of these creatures living in San Silvestre and in Peor Dicho, in Monte Oscuro and in La Gualapa."

And another added: "There are a lot that live in San Silvestre and around it, they stay away from the church and they also exist in other areas nearby.



Canal 10

"In San Jose they live in another hill there, and they communicate from hill to hill"

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Mysterious 'Purple Blob' Spotted Off California Coast

Jul 28, 2016 07:04 AM ET seeker.com

The unidentified purple orb could represent a previously unknown type of egg sac or a new species.

Photo: Unidentified purple object spotted by the exploration vessel "Nautilus" off the CA coast. Credit: YouTube still, Ocean Exploration Trust

A mysterious "purple blob" in the Pacific Ocean off of California's southern coast was spotted this week by Ocean Exploration Trust's vessel, *Nautilus*.

The as-of-yet unidentified purple orb could represent a previously unknown type of egg sac or a new species, according to researchers aboard the vessel, which has been streaming live footage. The moment of discovery, complete with the scientists' comments and a curious crab, was captured in full on video:

As the video shows, the colorful orb was sucked into the vessel. Shortly thereafter, Nautilus Live shared via social media that the find was collected from the Arguello Canyon near the NOAA Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

"After sampling," the statement reads, "it began to unfold to reveal two distinct lobes. This may be a new species of nudibranch, or sea slug."

Several hours later, this update was posted: "We're still working on a species ID with our science partners, but currently we're thinking the purple orb is a pleurobranch, a nudibranch relative."

Pleurobranchs are a type of sea slug that have a prominent outer covering called a mantle and an internal shell that reduces, or is entirely lost, in adults. Pleurobranchs often visually stand out from the substrate.



Photo: Pleurobranchus forskali. Credit: Samuel Chow, Wikimedia Commons As researchers further analyze the still mysterious orb, Nautilus has continued its exploration of waters off the southern California coast. A short while ago, the scientists posted the following image saying: "From mysterious purple orbs to this crinoid on a column of whelk snail eggs, we never know what we'll find on the deep sea floor!"

Crinoids are marine animals that have been around for about 450 million years, putting their earliest days ahead of dinosaurs. They are referred to as living fossils since their basic anatomy has not noticeably changed much over the years.

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International Business Times UK

Remains of a strange creature have been found by Siberian miners in diamond-yielding sands.

 ByLéa Surugue August 10, 2016 10:19 BST



This little mummified monster has been found in a diamond mine north of Siberia Siberian Times



The Udachnaya pipe diamond deposit is an open-pit diamond mine located just outside the Arctic Circle. Siberian Times

A bizarre mummified creature has been discovered at the heart of a diamond mine in the Sakha Republic, in northern Siberia. This ancient "monster" could date back to between 252 and 66 million years ago.

The Siberian Times reports that the miners who found the remains had been working at the Udachnaya pipe diamond deposit, an open-pit diamond mine located just outside the Arctic Circle.

The site was discovered in 1955 and since then yielded 350 million tonnes of ore containing rough diamonds. There has also been a number of unusual discoveries such as that of a mystery red rock full of diamonds.

However, no find has been as strange as the mummified monster that has just been uncovered. Its origins are particularly puzzling because no one is capable just yet to say what this species is – it is like nothing ever found before in the region. The miners believed they had just stumbled upon the remains of a previously unknown species of dinosaurs.

Their theory has yet to be proven. The creature will therefore be taken for more analysis to the regional capital Yakutsk, a city 1,686km south of the Udachnaya diamond pit.

Other hypothesis about the little monster's potential origins are that it might have bee the ancestor of the wolverine, a carnivorous mammal resembling a small bear or of the marten – another slender, agile mammal living in the snow forests of Siberia.

Closer analysis of the mummy's morphology, bones, and of possible DNA samples should yield more clues about its origins and give a more precise approximation of the time it lived at.

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The miners believed the creature to be an ancient unknown dinosaur Siberian Times

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Search resumes for Nazi gold train that might not even exist

Aug. 13, 2016 Sj-r.com



The State Journal-Register
 By The Associated Press
 Posted Aug. 16, 2016 at 6:54 AM



Heavy machinery begins the search by explorers hoping to find a legendary Nazi train laden with treasure and armaments in Walbrzych, Poland, on Tuesday. (AP Photo/Czarek Sokolowski)

WARSAW, Poland — Explorers in Poland began digging Tuesday for a legendary Nazi train said to be laden with treasure and armaments.

They're not dissuaded by decades of fruitless searches, a scientific determination that no train is there and warnings by historians that such a train might have never even existed.

The search in southeastern Poland attests to the power of a local legend claiming a Nazi "gold train" disappeared in a mountain tunnel as the Germans escaped the advancing Soviet army at the end of World War II.

As the dig got underway, a yellow excavator moved earth along railroad tracks above the spot where two explorers believe the train is buried. The work is expected to last several days.

The two men claimed last year to have located the elusive train with radar equipment deep in the bowels of the earth in the city of Walbrzych, sparking a gold rush in that area.

A government official initially said he was "99 percent sure" the train was there, helping to feed the frenzy. The arrival of treasure hunters and curiosity seekers from across Europe gave a welcome financial boost to the surrounding coal mining region of Silesia, which has struggled since unprofitable mines in the area were closed after the fall of communism.

Late last year, geological experts using magnetic equipment found no train on the spot, and the matter seemed to have been settled quietly.

But the explorers refused to give up.

Andrzej Galik, a spokesman for the search team, said six independent companies using various radar devices have detected anomalies indicating the shape of a tunnel underground.

"The results of the ground-penetrating radar examinations are very promising," Galik said. "It's so exciting and we count on success."

Historians say the existence of the train, which is said to have gone missing in May 1945, never has been conclusively proven. Polish authorities nonetheless have seemed eager to pursue any chance of recovering treasures that have sparked the imaginations of local people for decades.

At the height of the frenzy last year, the World Jewish Congress reminded Poland's authorities in the case of a discovery of a treasure-laden train, any valuables belonging to Jews killed in the Holocaust must be returned to their rightful owners or their heirs.

Legend holds the train was armed and loaded with treasure and disappeared after entering a complex of tunnels under the Owl Mountains, a secret project known as "Riese" — or Giant — which the Nazis never finished.

The area belonged to Germany at the time, but has been part of Poland since the borders were moved in the postwar settlement.

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New Dwarf Planet Discovered Far Beyond Pluto's Orbit

By Mike Wall, Space.com Senior Writer | July 11, 2016 02:01pm ET

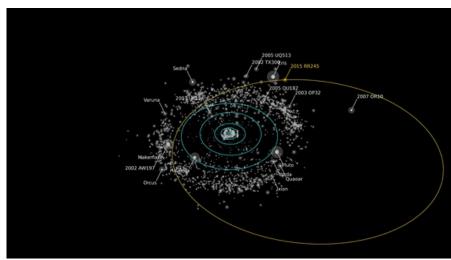
space.com

Pluto isn't quite as lonely as scientists had thought.

Astronomers have discovered another dwarf planet in the Kuiper Belt, the ring of icy objects beyond Neptune. But this newfound world, dubbed 2015 RR245, is much more distant than Pluto, orbiting the sun once every 700 Earth years, scientists said. (Pluto completes one lap around the sun every 248 Earth years.) You can see an animation of the new dwarf planet's orbit here.

"The icy worlds beyond Neptune trace how the giant planets formed and then moved out from the sun," discovery team member Michele Bannister, of the University of Victoria in British Columbia, said in a statement. "They let us piece together the history of our solar system." [Meet the Solar System's Dwarf Planets]

"But almost all of these icy worlds are painfully small and faint; it's really exciting to find one that's large and bright enough that we can study it in detail," Bannister added.



Rendering of the orbit of the newfound dwarf planet RR245 (orange line), which scientists say is the 18th largest object in the Kuiper Belt beyond Neptune.

Rendering of the orbit of the newfound dwarf planet RR245 (orange line), which scientists say is the 18th largest object in the Kuiper Belt beyond Neptune.

Credit: Alex Parker/OSSOS team

The exact size of 2015 RR245 is not yet known, but the researchers think it's about 435 miles (700 kilometers) wide. Pluto is the largest resident of the Kuiper Belt, with a diameter of 1,474 miles (2,371 km).

The research team first spotted

2015 RR245 in February of this year, while poring over images that the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope in Hawaii took in September 2015 as part of the ongoing Outer Solar System Origins Survey (OSSOS).

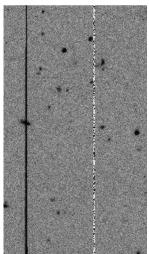
"There it was on the screen — this dot of light moving so slowly that it had to be at least twice as far as Neptune from the sun," Bannister said.

OSSOS has discovered more than 500 objects beyond Neptune's orbit, but 2015 RR245 is the first dwarf planet that the survey has found, the scientists said.

Discovery images of the dwarf planet RR245, showing the object's slow motion across the sky over three hours.

Credit: OSSOS team

Dwarf planets are massive enough to be crushed into spheres by their own gravity, but they have not "cleared their neighborhood" of other objects, which differentiates them from "normal" planets such as Earth and Saturn. This definition, which was devised by the International Astronomical



Discovery images of the dwarf planet RR245, showing the object's slow motion across the sky over three hours.

Union in 2006, led to Pluto's controversial reclassification as a dwarf planet.

Astronomers are still working out the details of 2015 RR245's highly elliptical orbit, but the object appears to come as close to the sun as 34 astronomical units (AU), and farther away than 120 AU. (One AU is the average Earth-sun distance — about 93 million miles, or 150 million km.)

2015 RR245 — which will get a catchier, official name at some point — will make its closest approach to the sun in 2096, the researchers said.

Other confirmed dwarf planets in the Kuiper Belt region include Pluto, Eris, Haumea and Makemake. Several other objects in this distant realm, including Sedna, Quaoar and 2007 OR10, probably meet the dwarf-planet criteria as well, scientists have said.

Follow Mike Wall on Twitter @michaeldwall and Google+. Follow us @Spacedotcom, Facebook or Google+. Originally published on Space.com.

Mike Wall, Space.com Senior Writer

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9:30pm, Sep 5, 2016Updated: 9:46pm, Sep 5



The last known Tasmanian tiger died in captivity at Hobart Zoo in 1936. Neil FranklandPM News Editor (EDM)

It's of poor quality, grainy and out of focus. All the qualities we've come to expect from groundbreaking footage of extinct or mythical species.

The Thylacine Awareness Group of Australia (TAGA) has released video purporting to show a believed-to-be extinct Tasmanian tiger, or thylacine, stalking through a garden in the Adelaide Hills this year.

While the last known Tasmanian tiger, known as Benjamin, died in captivity at Hobart Zoo in 1936, numerous supposed sightings in the ensuing decades have been enough to convince some that the mammal is still with us.

TAGA founder Neil Waters says the latest footage – released to coincide with National Threatened Species Day on Wednesday – was taken in February and shows, what he believes to be, the same mainland thylacine first seen by "five people in broad daylight in March last year".

"This year in February, it returned and we were lucky enough to have someone there who grabbed about three seconds' worth of footage before it darted off into the creek," he says on the TAGA Facebook page.

"This footage is the first of five possible thylacine videos we plan to release over the coming weeks."

News Limited quoted the South Australian Museum's mammals senior researcher Dr Cath Kemper as saying she met with Mr Waters and watched the video, but struggled to see any definitive proof the animal was a thylacine.

"We looked at it quite a few times and I couldn't say either way, you know, it's too blurry, but it's interesting," Ms Kember said.

"He pointed to the base of the tail and he said it looks like it has a thicker tail at the base, which is sort of a thylacine characteristic, but I said I'm sorry, I don't see that in this.

"You never know, if they do get a real picture of a thylacine or something, then they'll be laughing at us. I'd quite like that actually, wouldn't that be nice."

The blurry, inconclusive nature of the latest thylacine footage puts it in good company when it comes to iconic creature photography.

Mr Waters has invited people to share the thylacine video on Facebook "in order to raise a few \$\$ on YouTube to fund the filming and editing of our upcoming series of mini-documentaries on thylacines and other cryptic animals still believed to be roaming the Australian mainland today".

"The fight to prove what we all know to be true isn't over yet folks, but we will get there eventually," he said. "This video is proof that we are seriously on to something."

Mr Waters says his group is "on the cusp of proving the existence of the thylacine, not in Tasmania but in mainland Australia".



Tasmania's Cascade Brewery, which uses a Thylacine as its symbol, keeps a stuffed example on display.

"Threatened Species Day commemorates the 80th anniversary of the passing of Benjamin, the last thylacine to die in captivity in Beaumaris Zoo in Hobart, Tasmania in 1936," Mr Waters said.

"But since then, there has been over a thousand sightings of thylacines in Tasmania, and nearly 5000 on mainland Australia – and South Australia has had its fair share of those sightings."

In 1973, South Australians Gary and Liz Doyle shot 10 seconds of 8mm film showing an unidentified animal running across a road.

Due to the poor quality of the film, it has been impossible to positively identify it as a thylacine.

The thylacine was already thought to be extremely rare or extinct on the Australian mainland before British settlement, but it survived on Tasmania.

Due to intensive hunting encouraged by bounties, disease, the introduction of dogs and human encroachment into its habitat, thylacine numbers dwindled to extinction by the 1930s.

American media mogul Ted Turner offered a \$100,000 reward for proof of the continued existence of the thylacine in 1983.

In 2005, Australian news magazine *The Bulletin*, offered a \$1.25 million reward for the safe capture of a live thylacine. An offer of \$1.75 million has since been offered by a Tasmanian tour operator Stewart Malcolm.

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NASA Confirms Astronauts Can't Hunt Pokémon Aboard the International Space Station | Nerdist

nerdist.com



NASA Confirms Astronauts Can't Hunt Pokémon Aboard the International Space Station

NASA Confirms Astronauts Can't Hunt Pokémon Aboard the International Space Station

Posted by Kyle Hill on July 11, 2016

Pokémon GO is now a certified digital phenomenon. More Americans play the game than use Tinder, and in less than a week Nintendo's stock has jumped 25 percent — the best week for the company in over 30 years. But even with tens of millions of people playing, there are still many unanswered questions about the killer AR app (because it explains almost nothing about the game

to you). Chief among them is the question of legendary pokémon like Zapdos and Mewtwo. Where are they hiding? Area 51? Chernobyl? What about space?

Unfortunately, we're not going to answer that last question any time soon.

Earlier today, science and space reporter Miriam Kramer asked the International Space Station's Twitter account a very important question: "Can you #PokemonGO on the International Space Station?" NASA's account quickly responded:

Unfortunately, no. There are smartphones, but the crew only uses them for @ISS_Research and they don't have internet https://t.co/aBUx2c69mj

— Intl. Space Station (@Space Station) July 11, 2016

Geez, our astronauts are so busy doing "science" that they can't request billions of dollars for extraterrestrial internet access and some time to check if a Mew if floating around the Canadarm? IF MEW WAS GOING TO BE ANYWHERE IT WILL BE UP THERE, JUST WATCH THE OLD ANIME INTRO SCENE...sorry, sorry. We're a little sunburnt and delirious with Pokémon Fever from this weekend.

Though no one can confirm there are Pokémon in space, you can still see if pocket monsters are fans of NASA. Head over to Pasadena, California and find the Jet Propulsion Laboratory grounds. There's a gym.

JPL's mission control is a gym

pic.twitter.com/aVHr1wo59v

- Arko (@arkorobotics) July 11, 2016

What do you think? How is Niantic going to roll out legendary Pokémon, or how should they? Let us know in the comments below.

Images: Nintendo, The Pokemon Company

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Sorry, Olympians, But This Bizarre Restroom Activity Is Banned At Rio 2016

huffingtonpost.com

Sorry, Olympians, But This Bizarre Restroom Activity Is Banned At Rio 2016 It's probably a good thing.

08/07/2016 03:37 am ET | Updated 7 hours ago

Is toilet fishing even a thing?

Apparently so, if this instructional sign inside a Rio 2016 bathroom is anything to go by.

U.S. basketball star Elena Delle Donne posted a photograph of the restroom regulations to Instagram on Saturday, and it's now going viral.

"Guess I won't be toilet fishing today," she quipped, in reference to the image on the bottom left — which shows a figure using a fishing rod inside a toilet.

Other bathroom activities that appear to have been banned at the games in Brazil include peeing like a dog (bottom right), vomiting (mid-left) and defecating with your feet on the seat (mid-right).

Canadian snowboarder Sebastien Toutant posted a photograph of a similar sign to Twitter during the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

"Well that's interesting ... Sochi rules in the bathrooms!!" he wrote alongside the image — which also prohibited toilet fishing and peeing while standing up.

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Not so jovial after all: how historians misunderstood William the Conqueror

Dalya Alberge Saturday 20 August 2016 Last modified on Saturday 20 August 2016

theguardian.com

The cheerful and generous nature many chroniclers ascribed to the victor of the battle of Hastings in fact belonged to someone else, says historian



William the Conqueror: a French abbot is revealed to be the true owner of his praiseworthy qualities.

Photograph: Hulton Archive/Getty Images

The history books refer to William the Conqueror as jovial and generous, among other surprising qualities recorded in an 11th-century Latin text written after the king's funeral.

In fact, historians have got him wrong. A new translation of the rambling chronicle reveals that such praiseworthy adjectives were directed at someone else completely – a recently deceased abbot rather than the late king.

Photograph: Hulton Archive/Getty Images The discovery was made by a British historian, Marc Morris, while researching his forthcoming book on William of Normandy, whose conquest of England in 1066 altered the course of the nation's history.

He told the Observer: "It's very difficult assessing people's personalities at a distance of a millennium, but academics for the past 50 or 60 years have written that ... he was quite jovial, cheerful, eloquent, good-natured – not the brute you might suppose."

Morris decided to go back to the original text, which was written by a Burgundian monk called Hugh of Flavigny after William's burial in St Stephen's Church at Caen in Normandy. "Every biography of William on my shelf mentions Hugh's description of William the Conqueror in the context of the king's funeral in 1087."

The chronicle has been in print since the 19th century, in a multi-volume collection titled the Monumenta Germaniae Historica, but only in the original Latin – "flowery Latin at that, not the normal administrative Latin that most medieval historians – like me – can cope with," Morris said. "I looked at this passage and thought it doesn't look right to me."

He asked a Latin expert, Professor David D'Avray of University College London, to translate it. The new version revealed that the adjectives do indeed appear in the text, but in relation to a little-known abbot. The praise was not about William but "this admirable man", Abbot Richard of Verdun.

Morris said: "So this house of cards came crashing down. There's no good evidence for a genial, jolly, jovial William the Conqueror. It's clear from looking at academic biographies written in the past 50 years that it has always been mistranslated."

Noting that previous biographies refer to William's "generosity" and "cheerfulness", among other adjectives, he added: "The surprising thing to me was how little all these biographers made of this material. It's very hard to find good, trustworthy characterisations of people from 950 years ago, even if they are kings, so a genuine encomium of praise that mentioned all these qualities should be gold-dust. What made me particularly suspicious was that none of these historians provided a direct

quote from Hugh of Flavigny, only a paraphrase of what he wrote. This made me want to read his words for myself.

"Without this passage, the evidence of a cheerful and affable conqueror collapses."

Morris is the author of acclaimed books that include King John: Treachery, Tyranny and the Road to Magna Carta and The Norman Conquest. His new book, titled William I: England's Conqueror, will be published in the Penguin Monarchs series on 25 August before the 950th anniversary of 1066.

At the battle of Hastings, William's Norman army defeated King Harold's English army. The battle was one of the bloodiest, even by medieval standards, and arguably the most important in English history.

Harold was killed, the English fled and William assumed the throne, transforming the country's political, social and geographical landscape. He founded Battle Abbey on the battlefield site, as penance for the blood shed that day.

More than 100,000 people died as a result of the Norman Conquest. The size of the armies on either side at Hastings is unknown but neither is likely to have exceeded 10,000 men, Morris said: "Many were killed during the battle but thousands more would die in the years that followed, as English resistance led to Norman repression."

English Heritage is marking the anniversary with various events. More than 1,066 Norman and Saxon soldiers will gather for a replay of the battle and a group of re-enactors – "Warriors of 1066" – will pay tribute to the soldiers by retracing King Harold's march from York to Battle after the battle of Stamford Bridge. English Heritage notes that they could not follow Harold's exact route as "logistics and A roads prevent this".

comments (1186)

LucreziaD 30m ago

Historiographical work is based on the study of sources of the time, written or not. It is a known fact that for Western Europe of the Middle Ages, the overwhelming majority of such written documentation is in Latin.

How is it possible to be a professional Middle Ages historian and do not have a perfect grasp of Latin? And that none of those professional noticed for 50 years?

Fretboy2h ago

'I've persecuted the natives of England beyond all reason, whether gentle or simple. I have cruelly oppressed them and unjustly disinherited them, killed innumerable multitudes by famine or the sword and become the barbarous murderer of many thousands both young and old of that fine race of people.'

The supposed death bed confession of william the bastard

ChuckMarteau Fretboy1h ago

Then he added...

Just kidding!

2h ago

I'd recommend reading "The Wake" by Paul Kingsnorth for an interesting take on the Norman conquest:

http://paulkingsnorth.net/books/the-wake/

LatteTrouble

2h ago

What?! Not jovial and generous?! (Clutches pearls and gracefully swoons into the nearest chair.)

johnypaty

4h ago

& did not Harold & his troops lose, because they had quickly returned from the battle of Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire to confront William. They were exhausted & hungry; very unfortunate as (if correct) the Normans were ready waiting for them.

JudyKwok

5h ago

How delightful to see more evidence that academics who bluster about the Facts are actually repeating stuff they haven't read and which can now be shown to be wrong.

pavanne JudyKwok3h ago

You mean evidence provided by more detailed work by further academics?

The problem with generally knocking smart people who do research is that they're usually not proved wrong by stupid people who didn't do any research.

Dawson709 JudyKwok2h ago

History does not repeat itself, but historians do - Old History Major saying.

Locost5h ago

He used to tell a darn good knock, knock yoke

Nigel George Romeril
 6h ago

A man known as William 'the Bastard' or 'the Conquerer' was never going to be a cheery forgiving soul.

He hung on to his Normandy possessions by the skin of his teeth and the skin off other peoples' backs for a long time before grabbing England as well.

Add in the Harrowing of the North and other slaughters.

What next?

Adolf Hitler despite his liking for dogs was a mean spirited racist?

ManilaRed

7h ago

Rather timely given recent demise of Gerald Grosvenor and inheritance of Duke of Westminster title and property by his son, Hugh. That their wealth is due to an ancestor being a good friend of William the Conqueror (or Bastard, take your pick) is astonishing and enough reason to despise the Norman invasion.

ManilaRed

7h ago

I always thought he was a mean, arrogant SOB.

• ID6023299

8h ago

Who?

Wahwahblahblah

10h ago

All kings and queens are nice. Just ask their pr people.

• 123Cybertrad

10h ago

Goes to prove the old saying: History is the story of something that did not happen, told by somebody who was not there.

JudyKwok 123Cybertrad

5h ago

Old it may be, but it's new to me and I laughed my camiknickers off.

AlanWatson

10h ago

"William the Conqueror" is rather a British take on him. I noticed recently that in a Belgian museum he was referred to as "William the Bastard" (the name his contemporaries would have used).

RuudGM AlanWatson

4h ago

He was William, Duke of Normandy. Or, rather, Guillaume, duc de Normandie. He spoke French, and lived in Normandy, France. When he conquered England he made everyone he hadn't killed speak French. That's why we still do. "Duke" is French ("duc"). "Conquer" is "conquérir". "Arrive", "demand", "envelope", whatever - there are thousands upon thousands of French words in English, thanks to this guy. When he had defeated Harold Godwinson in the Battle of Hastings in 1066, he became known as William the Conqueror (or maybe years after that). But he was indeed a bastard, in that he was the son of the Duke of Normandy and a lowly wench. The duke chose him as his successor. I don't think "William the Bastard" was derogative. It just stated facts. But I'm sure he was a real bastard, in the sense of a sonofabitch. I just can't picture any monarch until the twentieth century who hasn't been. In any case, what's there to fete? The fact that a relatively small army of pseudo-Frenchmen conquered England and turned it upside down? Very nice.

aphrabenn11h ago

An affable warlord never occurred to me in the first place.

I've never understand the current fascination with battle re-enactments. Does this mean in a hundred years or so we'll be seeing Battle of the Somme re-enactments? How the passage of time 'cosies' history is weird.

Blu Beret aphrabenn10h ago

People already do WWII re-enactments. A work colleague's husband went all the way to Italy to do one.

CreationismIsMagic11h ago

"Arguably the most important battle in English history"

Surely nowhere near as important as the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

Hastings led to the 100 years War, but apart from that it mainly meant that the ruling class was Norman not English. The Armada kept England from Catholicism which has been rather more influential in GB history.

Tadcu Gwyrdd CreationismIsMagic11h ago

"it mainly meant that the ruling class was Norman not English" There were no "English" before the Normans. They were Anglo-Saxons. The English people and language came about from an amalgamation between the Normans and the Anglo-Saxons.

It's like saying that if Hitler had succeeded in his invasion of Britain all that would have happened is that the ruling class would be German and not English. I think the millions who would have died in the extermination camps would disagree with you there. The

100,000 killed by the Normans is equivalent to nearly 3 million of the 48M population in 1940.

Locost Tadcu Gwyrdd5h ago

A Plantagenet expelled the Jews you know!

JudyKwok CreationismIsMagic5h ago

If the Spanish had defeated us, we'd have played a different style of football and eaten our supper around eleven at night.

W3oodStock

11h ago

Well, Bill, the Ass Kicker set up the 1%ters on your side of the Pond 950 years ago, which was a major reason to come over here ever since 1492 or so.

However, now our 1%ters are the world's worst and impossible to get away from unless one wants to go on a strict diet in North Korea.

Obviously, human nature has been hard on the little guy ever since Adam ate Eve's apple.

Just as obvious that the 1%ters have never had a sense of humor. They're very serious Ass Kickers.

Instead of everyone wanting to be a 1%ter, we should really test the power of the vote. Unless we have a huge write-in for Bernie, we'll never get there with either the Hill or T-Rump.

Comeback Bernie and Go Bernie Go.

Bryan Harris W3oodStock9h ago

This article had nothing to do with American politics. I think you're confused.

Mynameistoocommon W3oodStock 30m ago

Yes, before William I there was no aristocracy or nobility in the UK and everyone shared their wealth equitably. You really need to understand history better if you're going to attempt these kinds of arguments.

scubadoc

12h ago

William the Bastard was a warlord: warlords, particularly ones who win a kingdom, aren't noted for joviality. Brutal, if hardly unusual, repression of the conquered English has left us with an hereditary aristocracy that poisons public life over nine-hundred years later, despite

Robin Hood, several changes of dynasty, the defeat of the Cavaliers and a Glorious Revolution...

... I'm not sure that Marc Morris, puffing his book contradicting a "fact" that hardly anyone is concerned about, amounts to much.

• adventussaxonum

12h ago

He was a vicious, murdering "bastard" who realised his crimes as he neared his end. He destroyed a cultured, well ordered society which had survived the Scandinavian invasions intact.

His rule led the "English" crown to invasions of Scotland and occupation of Wales and Ireland, and all the bitterness which accompanied them. It also enhanced the divisions between the aristocracy (now foreign and insecure) and the rest of us.

No wonder the ruling classes always liked to portray 1066 as the "start" of England, rather than a disastrous cultural and economic set-back 140 years into its existence.

Zenitruehe

13h ago

News to me. I always learned that he was a degenerate and vicious swine, hated by all. I am reminded not only of the Harrowing of the North but also the practice of cutting off the front paws of hunting dogs, within a certain radius of royal forests so they could not be used by poachers.

On the occasion of this anniversary, how appropriate that we have shown our bow fingers to Brussels, based as it is on French administrative practice. We should go the whole hog and eradicate French from our language, replacing it with German words. Who knows, maybe we will even think about finally abolishing the feudal system.

ID2463357 Zenitruehe12h ago

Um...I suppose you're just joking, but how is French less EU than German?

foolisholdman Zenitruehe11h ago

I was told by my mother that the Union of British Fascists (Or whatever the Blackshirts called themselves) tried, in the 1930s, to get a movement started to replace the Latinard Greek-based words in English with words with Germanic roots. She said that the word and phrase that finally got them laughed out of it were: "Child wainling" for pramand the "gothroughsomeness" for penetratability

ineptuk Zenitruehe3h ago

One wonders whether William and the other Normans were any more 'nasty' than the Anglo-Saxons or other 'nation states' in Europe of the time. They conducted a war after a dispute over who should have the throne of England and pursued it with the vigour normal of the time.

Like another commenter I assume you are joking but if you are correlating those times with Brexit it s rather wrought and insipid. And possibly incorrect, considering the strained relations the Normans had with the remainder of France.

Gramercy

13h ago

Billie the Broom not jovial?

You'll be saying next that Richard the Turd was a likable stand-up comedian.

John Keane

13h ago

Not much to say but i'm the 1066th comment - one in the eye for some ;)

HondaOxford

14h ago

I rather like calling him Norman the Conqueror- makes William kinder and gentler somehow...

wichdoctor

14h ago

William the bastard was one of my ancestors but I have never thought him anything other than a murdering thug. I may have learned my history 60 years ago but there was never any mention of him being jolly. My history books then only related his killing rampages around the country and his cruelty to the defeated English.

The man was a typical medieval gangster, Any jollity was probably on a par with Herman Goering.

Duxk

14h ago

I've always heard he was a complete bastard... Take the harrowing of the North for example. And he knew it, didn't he leave money to ensure monks prayed for his soul in perpetuity?

ID124919 Duxk

14h ago

Didn't everyone? Standard insurance....

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Not that RNC. Canadian police field angry, admiring Trump tweets

July 21, 2016 yahoo.com

OTTAWA (Reuters) - For all the fervor the Republican National Convention has generated on Twitter this week, some users have directed their anger and admiration of the events in Cleveland toward a very different organization - a provincial police service on the east coast of Canada.

The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary's handle, @RNC_PoliceNL, is the first that comes up in a Twitter search for "RNC," a top search related to the Republican National Convention being held this week.

The confusion has led to a barrage of tweets being directed at the police force in the Atlantic province.

"Go Trump beat crooked Hillary!!!" one person tweeted at the police department while another warned of a "bloodbath if you don't temporarily suspend the open and concealed carry law."

"Pray all is peaceful in Cleveland tonight," another user tweeted to the department.

The provincial RNC has politely replied to many users that it has no connection to U.S. political parties in an effort to set the record straight. It added the word "police" to its handle three months ago, but that has not deterred Twitter users from sending messages about Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump.

"It's like getting the wrong number. If your phone number was one digit off the pizza place, people would always be phoning you to order a pepperoni pizza," said Constable Geoff Higdon, who runs the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary's social media

Higdon has blocked hundreds of users to prevent the department from being bombarded with retweets and has resorted to hashtags such as #WeAren'tTheRepublicans and #CanadaEh to help deter the tweets.

The message appeared to be getting through to some.

"I'd still for sure vote for your police chief for prez over @realDonaldTrump," one user said, using the hashtag CanadaPleaseComeSaveUs.

Higdon said there were no plans to change the identity of the police force, which considers itself the oldest civil police force in North American and dates back to 1729.

"What would we change it to? We are the RNC."

(Reporting by Leah Schnurr; Editing by Leslie Adler)

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Mystery numbers in N. Korea broadcasts carry Cold War echoes

July 19, 2016 yahoo.com

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea's state radio has recently broadcast strings of indecipherable numbers, Seoul officials said Tuesday, in a possible resumption of a Cold War-era method of sending coded messages to spies operating in South Korea.

A female announcer at the radio station read numbers for 2 minutes on June 24 and 14 minutes on Friday, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry and National Intelligence Service. A copy of those comments provided by the ministry included phrases such as "No. 35 on Page 459" and "No. 55 on Page 913."

During the Cold War, Pyongyang sent such numbers via shortwave radio to give missions to agents dispatched to South Korea, according to captured North Korean spies. It later reportedly stopped such broadcasts once it could communicate with its spies overseas via the internet, and as animosities with South Korea eased following a historic inter-Korean summit meeting in 2000. Relations have deteriorated greatly since then as North Korea has pursued the development of nuclear weapons despite international sanctions.

The announcer in the North Korean broadcasts described the numbers as "review assignments in physics (under the curriculum of) the remote educational university for the geological expedition members across the country" or "practice assignments in mathematic lessons (under the curriculum) of the remote educational university for expedition members of team No. 27."

Neither the Unification Ministry nor the NIS elaborated on whether South Korea believes the North's recent broadcasts were meant to send information to agents in the field. Some experts in Seoul view the messages as a North Korean attempt to wage psychological warfare.

Yoo Dongryul, head of the Seoul-based Korea Institute of Liberal Democracy, said the North may be trying to deceive South Korean intelligence officials into believing it's moving to increase its espionage operations.

He said it's unlikely the North would rely on old-fashioned "number stations" broadcasts, whose hard-to-reset coding patterns had already been exposed to South Korean intelligence officers. He said North Korea currently uses a more sophisticated espionage communication method known as steganography, in which secret messages are hidden within audio and video files.

For decades after the end of the 1950-53 Korean War, the rival Koreas sent agents across their heavily fortified border to infiltrate to each other's territory. But in recent years, both sides are believed to be focusing on less risky intelligence-gathering activities, such as information from the internet and satellite photos. Seoul accuses Pyongyang of sending spies disguised as ordinary refugees seeking to resettle in South Korea or nurturing pro-North figures in the South.

News of the North Korean broadcast came as North Korea is angrily reacting to the planned deployment of an advanced U.S. missile defense system in South Korea. On Tuesday, North Korea fired three ballistic missiles into the sea, according to Seoul defense officials.

Associated Press writer Kim Tong-hyung contributed to this report.

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'Do you live here all year?': Nunavut community invaded by largest cruise ship in Arctic history

| August 29, 2016 10:46 PM ET

nationalpost.com



If the looming 10-storey ship in the distance didn't tip off Cambridge Bay that Monday was going to be different, the swarms of retirees in identical red jackets would have.

"Do you live here all year?" is the most common question asked by passengers of the Crystal Serenity, followed closely by "what's the winter like?" (Answers: "Yes" and "cold")

It's all part of the largest invasion in the history of this Nunavut hamlet.

Cambridge Bay has been a stopover for passing ships since the days of Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. But on Monday, the community saw 900 people zodiac-ed into their 1,500-person community in only a matter of hours.

"There's some quiet grumbling from people, but mostly with humour; 'there they are, walking all over the road again,' said Vicki Aitaok, the community's cruise ship coordinator.

"People are pretty good natured, we haven't gotten any 'we don't want you here,'" added Aitaok.



Denise LeBleu Images Crystal Serenity passengers kayak off the Cambridge Bay shore with their escort vessel, the RSS Ernest Shackleton, in the background.

In fact, for many locals, the one-day arrival of the largest cruise ship to navigate the Northwest Passage has proved to be an excellent opportunity to make a buck.

Artists have come in from nearby settlement to join locals hoping to score the sale of a carving or a wall hanging.

Although, as the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association told the Nunatsiaq News, the average cruise ship passenger only spends \$75 — meaning sellers will be competing for a pool of about \$67,000.

Other locals have signed up to take work as

guides, caterers, cultural representatives and security.

"Mark your calendars! Lots of jobs available," read one announcement on a Cambridge Bay Facebook page.

The effect is that, for a few hours on Monday, the Crystal Serenity effectively rented Nunavut's fifth largest community.



Denise LeBleu Images Vicki Aitaok, owner of Qaigguit Tours, cruise ship co-ordinator located in Cambridge Bay. The cruise ship Crystal Serenity docked in Cambridge Bay during its tour of the Northwest Passage.

Arctic coast and a final destination in New York City.

"They seem to be everywhere you look," one resident told the *National Post*, adding "it doesn't seem to bother anybody."

Of course, being at the halfway point of the Northwest Passage means that Cambridge Bay has a mercifully short summer tourist season. To avoid getting trapped by encroaching ice, there's only a 10-day window in which a ship without a strengthened hull can safely visit the community.

In a 32-day voyage, the Crystal Serenity is running the Northwest Passage from west to east. Starting in Anchorage, AK, the vessel has scheduled stops along the Canadian

For much of the voyage, the luxury vessel will be carrying the largest theatre, largest swimming pool and only sushi restaurant to be found for thousands of kilometers.

The unprecedented voyage obtained the blessing of the Nunavut Impact Review Board, who weighed that the ship's sewage outflows would have no serious impact. Although the ship was advised that "interactions with polar bears should be avoided if at all possible."

Just in case, the Board also recommended that "guides carry 12 gauge shotguns, with the ability for non-lethal deterrents and lethal rounds."

Notably, the ship is being escorted by the icebreaker RRS Ernest Shackleton, a vessel operated by the British Antarctic Survey.

The British vessel is an insurance policy for a voyage that has often been described by travel writers with the word "dangerous." In 2010, for instance, the much smaller cruise ship Clipper Adventurer ran aground during a Northwest Passage trip, necessitating a rescue of its 100 passengers by the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker Amundsen.

There are no deepwater ports in Nunavut, so the 250-meter long ship had to anchor offshore and ferry in its passengers by zodiac to an area outside of Cambridge Bay known as "gravel pit."

Stepping past two red-serged Mounties posted at the beach, the visitors waded into a "culture camp" of dancers and singers.

From gravel pit, visitors can then pile into a menagerie of hired cars and vans to journey the 10 kilometers into town. There's a food fair at the high school, an arts and crafts festival at the community hall, and an open house at the Anglican Church, with guides posted at key corners to point wanderers in the right direction.

And as with all Nunavut tourists, many will inevitably slip into the local Northern Store to gawk at the expensive food.



Denise LeBleu Images The Crystal Serenity anchored off Cambridge Bay. The massive ship dwarfs almost every other structure in the Canadian arctic.

"Almost every local business is involved some way or other; either by their transportation or catering or providing products or services," said Aitaok.

Meanwhile, as the town core flooded with sightseers, ship's crew ferried a delegation, including Mayor Jeannie Ehaloak, hamlet councilors and the aforementioned Mounties, to be feted inside the ship's marble rotunda.

Just a few weeks ago in the waters off Cambridge Bay, Norwegian salvage crews successfully floated the Maud, a ship brought to the area by Roald Amundsen.

The wooden hulk, dry for the first time in 85 years, is a reminder that Cambridge Bay's choice location along the Northwest Passage has made it a travel hub since the days when only kayaks plied these waters.

Cruise vessels have been dropping in on the community for almost 25 years, with the rate spiking dramatically in recent years due to melting sea ice. Five ships will drop in on the community this year, compared to the one or two that trickled in only a decade ago.

Until now, aside from the occasion private yacht or sailboat, the hamlet has been visited almost exclusively by "expedition ships"; high-end charters staffed with expert lecturers and filled with wealthy Arctic-philes.

But with the arrival of the Crystal Serenity, Cambridge Bay now joins the likes of Victoria, Quebec and Halifax; Canadian towns flooded by an annual tide of giant ships disgorging fanny-packed tourists for a few hours at a time.

With this, the community is also getting its first taste of the run-of-the-mill cruise vacationer: Grey-haired, mildly flummoxed and not necessarily coached up on the local geography. What one outraged U.S. writer called the "world's worst people."

But Cambridge Bay, along with an earlier port of call at Ulukhaktok, NWT, genuinely seemed to appreciate the visit.

Although Aitaok said it was more "rushed" than typical visits, with harried cruise organizers trying to shepherd groups of 150 visitors through the town before the 8:48 p.m sunset.

"We're just not used to that, it's hard to make a connection with someone when you're rushed," said Aitaok.

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You're Under Arrest! Why The NYPD Would Arrest You In 1905

stuffnobodycaresabout.com



New York City police bringing suspects into the station. (circa 1900)

The police make more arrests now In New York City than they did In 1905. Of course the population has doubled from what it was in 1905. But it's the type of arrests that were made 111 years ago that are quite different from today.

Among the 4,014,304 people living in New York City in 1905 with almost 2 million foreign born and many of them poor, you would think there would be a lot of crime. And there was, but most of it was not violent. In 1905, there were 198,356 arrests for the year, with about 90 percent of them being misdemeanors.

So what crimes were New Yorkers charged with? The following information was taken from the Report of the Police Department of the City of New York for the Year Ending December 31, 1905. Below are 1905's top 13 offenses with the number of people arrested by the NYPD and the offense

they committed:

52,316 Intoxication / Intoxication and Disorderly conduct

39,972 Disorderly conduct

17,584 Violation of Corporation Ordinances

11.731 Assault and Battery

8,592 Disorderly Person

8,333 Vagrancy

7,991 Suspicious Person

6,880 Petit Larceny

5,031 Grand Larceny

3,939 Violation of Liquor Tax Law

3,795 Violation of Health Law

2,810 Felonious Assault

2,279 Burglary

In the breakdown of the hundreds of offenses that people were arrested for, here are some facts that might surprise you.

New York City police turned a blind eye to the oldest profession as only 13 people were arrested for prostitution. 10 for possessing or selling obscene pictures. 49 for arson. 16 for murder and 711 for homicide- (I never realized there was a technical difference between murder and homicide)!

Six were arrested for cruelty to children, yet 535 were arrested for cruelty to animals.

Incredibly only one person was arrested for bookmaking (taking bets). And one person was arrested for incest.

Now here are the number of arrests for some offenses that are not as common anymore:

55 Bigamy
336 Illegal voting
51 Keeping opium joint
69 Mayhem
75 Violation of Barber Law
10 Violation of Concert Law
1,053 Violation of Sabbath Law
92 Seduction
59 Sodomy

1,668 Abandonment (1,640 of those arrested were men for leaving their family) 410 Bastardy (fathering a child born out of wedlock)

It's a good thing bastardy was decriminalized in 1974, otherwise today you'd have tons of celebrities and athletes in jail.

There are various breakdowns of those arrested.

Out of 198,356 people arrested 192,450 could read and write. Only 5,906 people arrested were illiterate.

The largest group of people arrested were born in the United States, 85,252. Those U.S. born that were black numbered 9,718. Persons born in Russia, Italy, Ireland and Germany each had over 10,000 people arrested. Only 14 people arrested were from Puerto Rico, Six people were from India, two from Bulgaria and one from Lapland.

The most common occupation of those arrested were laborers with 37,367. The least common occupations with one person arrested in each occupation were a lamp lighter and a notary public.

There were 25 jockeys arrested. Ragpickers accounted for 347 of those arrested. 494 people held the bygone occupation of tinsmith.

The busiest precinct was the 19th precinct (then located at 137 W. 30th St.) with 12,233 arrests.

For a brief comparison to modern New York City, in 2013 with a population of about 8.3 million people there were a total of 316,216 arrests: 225,684 for misdemeanors and 90,532 for felonies.

The total number of murders (not arrests) was 335, a sharp decline from 1905 and an even steeper drop from 1990 when 2,245 murders were committed in New York City.

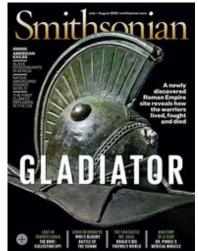
The majority of arrests today in New York City are for drug related offenses.

This entry was posted in History, New York and tagged 1900s, Crime, Criminals, Police on July 18, 2016 by B.P..

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Did Ancient Pacific Islanders Use Obsidian to Make Their Tattoos?

smithsonianmag.com



A team of Australian researchers think they may have found tools used to ink the ancients



(Lars Krutak)
By Jason Daley
smithsonian.com
July 13, 2016
12:05PM

The problem with studying ancient tattoos is that human skin just doesn't last through the ages. The few

examples we have all come from mummified remains: the Siberian Ice Princess Ukok has almost a full inked sleeve and Otzi the Iceman has 61 tattoos all over his body.

So tattoo researchers have begun to look for the tools used to ink the ancients. Though many early tattooing devices were likely made of biodegradable materials, a team of Australian researchers think they may have found inking tools made from the black volcanic glass obsidian.

"Tattooing is a very important cultural practice in the Pacific even today," study co-author Robin Torrence of the Australian Museum in Sydney tells Charles Q. Choi at *Live Science*. "In fact, the English word 'tattoo' comes from a Pacific Polynesian word: *tatau*." Tattoos were linked to the gods and mythology stories and represented social status, military strength and tribe or clan along with many other ritual functions.

The researchers analyzed 15 obsidian artifacts from a site in the Solomon Islands called Nanggu. The sharp, 3,000-year-old tools were originally believed to be used to scrape and tan hides. But Torrence and her team realized that the Solomon Islands don't have any large animals that would require this type of work. Instead, they wondered if the obsidian might have been used to make early tattoos.

To test that hypothesis, the researchers fashioned similar tools from local obsidian and used them to make 26 tattoos on pigskin with pigment red ochre, which comes from clay and charcoal—traces of which had been found on the Nanggu artifacts. They then compared the modern tools with the artifacts under the microscope, which revealed similar chipping, rounding and scratches on both sets of tools. They concluded in a paper recently published in the *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* that the tools were likely used for tattooing.

But not everyone is completely convinced. Lars Krutak, a tattoo anthropologist and research associate in the Department of Anthropology at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History tells Smithsonian.com that the obsidian could have been used to score bone tools or ritual implements painted with ochre. There is also no documentation of red ochre being used as tattoo



Obsidian artifacts found at the Nanggu site on the Solomon Islands. (Kononenko et al. Journal of Archeological Science)

pigment in Melanesia or other cultures, according to Krutak, though it's possible that ochre used to color the body during rituals could have infiltrated the cuts made while tattooing, ending up on the obsidian artifacts.

Red ochre would have also been a poor choice for tattoos. "The prehistoric people living at Nanggu most likely had a dark skin tone and red ochre would not show up well on the epidermis as a tattoo pigment," he says. "In fact, I doubt you could even see it."

There is, however, some precedent for obsidian flakes being used to make tattoos,

according to Krutak. Oral tradition and ethnographic studies report that the Ainu indigenous people of Japan made tattooing tools out of the glass, and descriptions of several Native American tribes in California during the late 19th and early 20th century also used obsidian for tattooing.

In East Polynesia, he says, evidence for a technique called hand-tapping emerges around 1000 A.D. and was likely practiced even earlier. It is still used to make tattoos to this day across Polynesia as well as in parts of Melanesia and beyond. In hand-tapping, an instrument with a sharp comb made of bone, pearl-shell or thorns is dipped in pigment then tapped into the skin using a mallet.



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Bizarre! Octopus swims into New Orleans neighborhood

wgno.com

Posted 9:39 AM, September 6, 2016, by Kenny LopezUpdated at 10:34am, September 6, 2016



NEW ORLEANS (WGNO)- How bizarre is this? A slimy octopus somehow slithered its way onto a New Orleans sidewalk.

Nick Williams, a local actor and opera singer, told News with a Twist Reporter Kenny Lopez that he was walking on Dauphine and Port streets in the Marigny when he spotted the octopus.

"I was walking home around 8 p.m. last night and thought, oh no someone didn't clean up after their dog, only to realize it was a real octopus. I didn't want to touch that slimy thing," Williams said.

Williams left it there on the sidewalk after taking a picture and posting it to his Instagram account.

Any guesses on where the octopus came from? That's still a mystery!

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Ohio woman who missed bus is charged with stealing ambulance

August 19, 2016 yahoo.com

CINCINNATI (AP) — Police say a woman who missed the last bus for the night is accused of stealing an ambulance to get home from a hospital in Ohio.

Court documents filed in Hamilton Municipal Court in Cincinnati say 43-year-old Lisa Carr is accused of getting into an ambulance that a driver had left running Thursday night and driving to her home in suburban Cincinnati. The driver apparently had left the ambulance to go inside the hospital with a patient.

Police say the Springfield Township woman was arrested after a short pursuit. They say she told them she took the ambulance because she had missed her bus home.

Carr is charged with theft, failure to comply with a police order and driving under suspension. Court records don't show an attorney for her.

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December 4, 2013



This image, which is in the collection at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, is thought to be the oldest extant daguerreotype in the United States. It is small — barely 2 inches square. (Image used with permission, courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania)

Emma Jacobs is a reporter covering the economy, government and immigration. Before arriving at WHYY, she reported on the economy in upstate New York. She was a *New York Times* Fellow at the Changing Face of America institute in 2013. Her work has been featured on NPR, PRI's The World and Marketplace. She is from Boston. Emma welcomes thoughts, tips and spare book galleys.

Today, the latest photography innovation is something like Snapchat. We take photos so easily and so casually, a photo can be seen once and then disappear.

It's hard to imagine things back in 1839,

when it took Joseph Saxton 10 minutes to expose a daguerreotype, the new technology of the time.

Saxton's daguerreotype, the oldest surviving "photograph" made in the United States, is not a dramatic view or composition. It shows Central High School at Walnut and Juniper sitting next to the Philadelphia armory, taken from what was the U.S. Mint at the time, where Saxton worked. His "camera" was composed primarily of a lens and a cigar box.

"A daguerreotype is basically a copper plate with a thin coating of silver on the outside," said Lee Arnold, director of the library and collections at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The original is a part of Arnold's collection.

"The technology traveled from Europe," he said, "so this wasn't happening in the U.S. This was a new technology, and he's fiddling with it."

A few months later, a Philadelphia lamp-maker, Robert Cornelius produced a self-portrait. It's also part of the Historical Society's collection.

The photo of Central High School spends little time on display — for reasons of preservation.

"Just like if you keep on banging the Liberty Bell, the crack is just going to get bigger," said Arnold. Time and too much light would make the surface look like a simple mirror, he said. The country's oldest photograph would simply disappear.

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Here's Why The Olympic Diving Pool Turned Green (UPDATE: It's Spreading)

huffingtonpost.com

It's not easy being green.

08/10/2016 01:52 pm ET | **Updated** 7 hours ago Ryan GrenobleReporter, The Huffington Post

This post has been updated to reflect that there is, uh, another pool that has turned green as well.

There's something in the water at the Olympic diving pool, and — after a day of hemming and hawing — officials said Wednesday it's probably just algae.

Water at the facility mysteriously changed hues overnight from a clear sky blue Monday to a soupy emerald green Tuesday, concerning athletes and officials alike.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Photos of the Rio Olympics diving pool on Monday (left), and Tuesday (right) show the water's dramatic color change overnight.

While officials on Tuesday assured Olympians that the Kermit-colored water posed no danger to their health, an explanation for the transition was harder to come by.

"Water tests at Maria Lenk Aquatic Park

were conducted and there was found to be no risk to athlete's health," officials told the BBC's Nick Hope. "We're investigating what the cause of the situation was but we are happy to report that the competition was successfully completed."

(Adding to the mystery: The Olympic pool — used for water polo (group stages) and synchronized swimming — located just steps away from the diving platform, remained blue).



Adam Pretty via Getty Images
General view of the diving pool at Maria Lenk
Aquatics Centre on Day 4 of the Rio 2016
Olympic Games at Maria Lenk Aquatics
Centre on August 9, 2016 in Rio de Janeiro,
Brazil.

On Wednesday, however, officials decided an algae bloom was to blame, prompted by plenty of heat and no wind.

In a statement to the Associated Press, Rio spokesman Mario Andrada said the green

was "a proliferation of algae."

Andrada said they expect the pool to return to its normal blue color sometime Wednesday.



always mentally prepared for unexpected situations."

Adam Pretty via Getty Images
A lifeguard sits by the edge of the diving pool on Day 4 of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

For the most part, Olympic athletes seemed unperturbed by the sudden color change, even though pollution in Rio de Janeiro has been a major storyline headed into the games.

"When we were practicing to get used to this venue (the water) was always sky blue,"
China's Liu Huixia told Reuters. "But we're



Adam Pretty via Getty Images
General view of the diving pool at Maria Lenk
Aquatics Centre on Day 4 of the Rio 2016
Olympic Games at Maria Lenk Aquatics
Centre on August 9, 2016 in Rio de Janeiro,
Brazil.

UPDATE — **Wednesday**, **6:37 p.m.**: As of Wednesday evening, the diving pool has not only failed to return to its original blue color, but the nearby pool — used for water polo and synchronized swimming — has adopted a green shade itself.

In an email to The Huffington Post, Nate Hernandez, a director at VivoAquatics, a company that specializes in managing large-scale aquatic installations, cast doubt on the sudden algae bloom theory floated by officials.

"It would have to be ideal conditions for algae to proliferate that quickly in that large of a body of water," Hernandez said.

While the higher temperatures might increase the likelihood of a bloom, that alone wouldn't suffice. According to Hernandez, water circulation within the pool would also need to have been cut to zero.

"No circulation – this could be a result of a mechanical failure, power failure, or simply human error in not circulating the pool."

CHRISTOPHE SIMON via Getty Images

The Olympic water polo pool, at left, began turning green Wednesday.

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Codename given by officials for Charles's coronation revealed

dailymail.co.uk 16:11 EST, 10 September 2016 |



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Operation Golden Orb: Codename given by officials for Charles's top secret coronation plans is revealed after Whitehall blunder

.com • For years even the name of the group has been kept secret

Only now do we know it is called Golden Orb after it

was left unredacted in a Whitehall document

- Members decide every detail of Prince Charles' coronation
- 'It is a reminder that the king swears vows of awesome severity to God'

By Ned Donovan For The Mail On Sunday



The committee, codenamed Golden Orb, is planning Prince Charles' coronation

For more than ten years, a panel of the great and the good have been meeting under a cloak of secrecy to discuss every detail of that most significant of regal occasions: the coronation of Prince Charles.

So confidential are their discussions that not even the name of the group has been made public.

But now, after a deeply embarrassing error by a Government official, the codename of the committee can be revealed as Golden Orb. The name was disclosed after it was left unredacted in a Whitehall document on an otherwise separate matter.

The group, made up of leading members of the aristocracy and other dignitaries, decides every last detail of the event.

It is chaired by the Duke of Norfolk, who serves as Earl Marshal, in charge of all State ceremonial events involving the Monarch.

The panel works without interference from Buckingham Palace or Clarence House, and is constitutionally autonomous.

The Duke also chairs a committee codenamed London Bridge, which is planning the Queen's funeral, and works under similar conditions.

Plans for Prince Philip's service are codenamed Forth Bridge.

The accidental revelation has upset courtiers who would prefer to keep such a sensitive matter out of the public eye.

The Queen placing the gem-encrusted gold coronet on the head of the Prince of Wales as he kneels before her at his Investiture at Caernarvon Castle in 1969

Dr Anna Whitelock, a Royal historian and TV presenter, said it was apt that the committee was named after part of the Crown Jewels used in the coronation.

She said: 'The orb is a hollow ball of gold and a Christian symbol of authority signifying Christ's dominion over the world represented in the next Monarch's power. The name of the committee reminds us that at the heart of the ceremony, the King is made to swear vows of awesome severity, not to his country, or even his subjects, but to God.'

Details of Charles's ceremony are closely guarded, but it is understood it will be a less grand affair than Elizabeth II's in 1953. That involved more than 8,000 quests cramming into Westminster Abbey for a three-hour



service. It went on for so long that many peers smuggled in alcohol underneath their ermine robes.



The Queen's coronation in June 1952

It is believed that Charles's coronation will be shorter, with many of the places allocated to charities by a ballot. Seats will be set aside for peers, diplomats, military officers, religious figures and representatives from the 15 countries of which he will also be King.

Charles, who will be the

oldest Monarch to ever take the crown, will also retain the title of 'Defender of the Faith' like his predecessors despite reports he would be 'Defender of Faith' instead.

Clarence House and Buckingham Palace declined to comment.



Comments (

Ned Seagoon, Camp Penguin, Antarctica, about an hour ago

Revenge of Chuckie.

Rexroth, London, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

Orb a hollow golden ball, not a very promising name

Walrus007, maple ridge, Canada, about 2 hours ago

I don't get it? Why is this a scandal? So they are planning for a large expensive event well in advance. What is the problem?

letariter, Lincoln, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

It looks as if someone has dropped an orb.

GrumpyOldFart, Kent, Canada, about 2 hours ago

Of course, we could always have the House of Cameron. Or Blair. Good grief.

mimiUSA, Nice, France, about 3 hours ago

Do they really need over ten years to prepare this thing? Isn't there protocol in place already for such a special event? Something must be brewing 'dans les coulisses'. What with William taking a course in Agriculture and last week touring his future inheritance the Duchy of Cornwall. They are getting ready for something. Next will be rehearsal and then the real thing. What will it be though? Live and learn.

Walrus007, maple ridge, Canada, about 2 hours ago

You don't get it. It is not that they are planning 20 years in advance, it's planning to have very little time to get it right without knowing when that time starts. You don't think the USA has carefully planned succession procedures ready to go at a moments notice?

Walrus007, maple ridge, Canada, about 2 hours ago

9/11/2016 Operation Golden Orb: Codename given by officials for Charles's top secret coronation plans is revealed after Whitehall blunder | Daily Mail Online

Sorry France mixed you up with other post location. Point still holds.

Annie52, Gloucestershire, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

Well they are hardly going to wait until the queen dies. They probably have plans in place for all types of eventualities. Must come under risk assessments.

John Martin, southampton, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

He is not capable the same with the rest of them the Queen should close the shop?

grumpy, Leicester, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

i completely agree - how can he be head of the church of england with a catholic wife - disgraceful

rah62, Whoville, about 3 hours ago

Let's hope the committee gets to spend another ten years having meetings. I'm hoping for a very brief interregnum by Charles before William ascends for possibly 40 years. Long Live The Queen.

Kommon Sense, UK, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

Let Charles be the next King, he's waited his whole life for it, Camilla no, consort only, never queen. That way William and Catherine will have more family time before they have to take up the reigns.

Published by Associated Newspapers Ltd

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By Ben Hooper Aug. 15, 2016 at 3:07 PM



An orangutan at the San Diego Zoo is fascinated by bubbles. Screenshot: San Diego Zoo Kids/Facebook

SAN DIEGO, Aug. 15 (UPI) -- The San Diego Zoo shared video of its latest enrichment tool for orangutans -- a bubble machine.

The zoo posted a video to Facebook Friday showing the orangutans reacting with surprise and curiosity to the bubbles that begin to fill their habitat.

The orangutans seem initially wary of the bubbles, but soon start to pop them and try to catch them in their mouths.

"Who doesn't love bubbles?!" the zoo's post asks.

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Exclusive: Rare photos inside the original Fisher Theatre

By Andrew Schneider Aug 16, 2016, 3:32p

curbed.com

Can you imagine if this hadn't been remodeled?

The original Fisher Theater
Photos contributed by Andrew Schneider

While helping clear out a basement last year in a neighborhood on Chicago's Northwest Side I stumbled on all that remained of a 1920s-era Chicago architecture firm.

Initially known as Graven & Mayger (Anker S. Graven & Arthur G. Mayger), the two named partners left the famed firm of Rapp & Rapp in 1926 to strike out on their own and landed their first large commission in competition: the Fisher Theatre, which was expected to be the jewel of Detroit's Fisher Building.

Graven & Mayger's design, which drew on the Mayan ruins in Mexico's Yucatan peninsula, filled the Fisher's requirement that the finished design be entirely different from any other theater built in the country.

"With the huge assortment of Roman, Greek, Spanish, Italian, Persian, Egyptian and other standard styles already in use, the Chicagoans had something of a problem to find a novelty," the Chicago Tribune reported when Graven & Mayger secured the commission in Sept. of 1927. "...the Maya Indians of the Yucatan peninsula generously provided the inspiration and the new showhouse will have for its motif the bizarre adornments of that ancient race."



Fisher Theater

When it opened, the theater not only featured their elaborate Mayan design and ornamentation, but also tropical plants which were exposed for an hour each day to ultra-violet light, a centerpiece fountain, and six Macau parrots which were chained to perches in the lobby.



The firm later split and

Fisher Theater

ultimately closed due to the untimely death of the principal, A.S. Graven in a boating accident in 1932. The firm's papers ended up in the hands of their chief draftsman, one Edward Rupinski, who passed away in 1961. On his daughter's death, the archive was still in the family's building and

contained plans, renderings, books, and hundreds of vintage photographs of the firm's work including these 32 of the Fisher Theatre.



1 of 32

Ultimately, the Fisher Building's theater was remodeled in the 1960s, ironically by Rapp & Rapp.

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DNA traces origins of Iceman's ragtag wardrobe - BBC News

bbc.com



B C By Jonathan Webb Science reporter, BBC News

• 18 August 2016



Image copyrightInstitute for Mummies and the Iceman

DNA analysis of Oetzi the Iceman's clothes has traced their origin to at least five different species of animal.

Among his kit were a hat of brown bear skin and a quiver made from roe deer.

Despite being well preserved and studied, the 5,300-year-old mummy's various leather items had not all been identified at the species level

Researchers from Ireland and Italy studied nine samples from six items species level.

These findings, published in Scientific Reports, reveal a mix of wild-hunted animals with sheep, goat and cattle related to modern domestic breeds.

The researchers say this points to Copper Age people choosing carefully between different wild and domesticated animals when looking for materials to make their clothes.

But Oetzi's motley wardrobe, including a coat made from at least four separate goat and sheep hides, could also suggest a more haphazard and desperate approach - stitching together whatever scraps of skin were available.

Image caption

Image copyright Institute for Mummies and the Iceman Image caption The Iceman's quiver (labelled 13) was made from roe deer leather

"It clarifies what we already knew - that the Iceman was an agropastoralist; that the majority the food and resources that he used were of domestic origin," said the paper's first author Niall O'Sullivan, a PhD student at University College Dublin based at the Institute for Mummies and the Iceman in Bolzano, Italy.

"But we also know, from earlier experiments, that he supplemented his living with food from wild sources. His last meal was composed of ibex and red deer.

"Our study shows that, as well as for food, for the manufacturing of leather he also used both wild and domestic animals."

The Iceman's belongings that the team pinpointed were:

- leggings made from goat skin
- · a shoelace of cow leather
- a sheep leather loincloth

- a quiver made of roe deer
- a fur hat, with straps, made from brown bear
- a coat of many fragments, incorporating both sheep and goat skin

These various leathers were all identified based on mitochondrial DNA - the separate, smaller genome found in the tiny compartments that turn food into energy inside living cells.

When Oetzi was discovered in 1991, famously well preserved in the ice of the Italian Alps, this type of ancient DNA analysis was impossible.

"25 years ago, the study of ancient DNA was in its infancy," Mr O'Sullivan told BBC News. "It would not have been possible to infer, to the same extent, the species of origin or how domesticated the leathers were."

Even today, he and his colleagues were surprised by how much they were able to learn.

"We analysed nine samples and for each one, we were able to reconstruct either a whole mitogenome or a partial mitogenome. We were very happy with that."

Follow Jonathan on Twitter

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Image copyright South Tyrolean Museum of Archaeology

2017 PROPHECY: Christians warn Pan-American solar eclipse to unleash biblical APOCALYPSE

express.co.uk



AMERICA and Europe will be plunged into darkness by a solar eclipse in 2017 - and then the world will end - according to a group of fundamentalist

Christians.

By Zoie O'Brien

PUBLISHED: 09:56, Tue, Sep 6, 2016 | UPDATED: 11:06, Tue, Sep 6, 2016

Hardcore Christian group predicts the end of the world in 2017

The apocalypse has been predicted next year by doomsayers from Christian website Unsealed.

The solar event will spread across America on August 21 next year - Crossing 12 US states.

Western Europe, including the UK, Ireland, France and Spain will then experience a partial eclipse.

It will be the first total eclipse to travel from one coast of America to the other, across 12 states, for almost a century.

Unsealed has said this event will be the beginning on the end.

The eclipse will leave the USA in darkness before Europe

The Christians are quoting the Bible as their main source of proof.

Scripture from the Book of Revelation supports its theory, according to Unsealed.

The conspiracy theorists have pointed to passages from The Book of Revelation to support their predictions.

They have highlighted passages describing a woman clothed in the sun, with the moon at her feet.

Unleashed refers to the Bible for evidence

Scripture says the woman will be hunted by a Satanic seven-headed dragon looking to eat her unborn child.

It is said the child will be born and taken unto god, before an army of angels defeats the dragon.

Conspiracy theorists have also pointed to the birth of Israel as a state, which began in 1947, to support the theory.

They give significance to mention of this in accounts of the end of the world and say that next year will mark a biblical generation – 70 years – since it happened.

Unsealed also highlights predictions of twelfth-century Rabbi Judah Ben Samuel, who reportedly said the end of the world would come in 2017.

But, the doomsayers do hint at some uncertainty in their predictions as they've also said that scripture warns "no one knows" the hour of the apocalypse.

103 Comments

15 hours ago

mistermac

What a bunch of fools. How many times have "american based" religious groups forecast the same old rubbish. Completely delusional.

17 hours ago

PaulEllis3

Hasn't anyone noticed the sheer volume of end of the world prophecies... and the annoying fact that they never happen?

23 hours ago

Badger28

Typical, I finish paying off my mortgage in 2017.

1 day ago

markthelark

I think all these Christians are jolly nice people

(edited)1 day ago

UK Be-Leaver

There is more chance of this happening than invoking Article 50 by this lot in charge

1 day ago

The Reno

Wow these type of articles certainly attract some very strange comments.

1 day ago

Edinburgh Expat

Good grief.....

1 day ago

Drrdf

What nonsense! If they knew their Bible as they claim to do, they would know that there are many events prophesied before the end of the world. The remaining wall of Herod's temple in Jerusalem must come down (not one stone shall be left on another); the Antichrist must arise with Apollyon subsequently rising from the pit with his demon (locusts); there will be 3.5 years of great war and Tribulation with the Mark of the Beast enforced after total economic collapse; then Jesus will return in great power and great glory as King of Kings and Lord of Lords; there will then be 1000 years of peace and plenty, during which Jesus and His saints will rule the earth. At the end of that period Satan shall be released from the bottomless pit in which he will be constrained during the millennium, and the final great war with God will take place. God will then burn up and destroy this earth with everything in it, and is making a new heaven and a new earth which will not be contaminated by sin. That is but a brief summary of the events to come and before the end of the world these shall be many other terrible disasters and judgments.

1 day ago

JBJB

They are going to feel very silly the day after when life continues as normal. Unless of course they commit mass suicide in which case they will never know

1 day ago

Cocteau

So were all going to be "wiped out" by a shadow. Okey DOkey....

1 day ago

Bogstandard

The USA and Europe will come to an end, nice to know the rest of the world will survive

1 day ago

Cuchulainn

Maybe you should move while there's still time? They say North Korea's lovely this time of year.

1 day ago

silver sun

Actually it is, and nothing like the MSM would have you believe. The food is good, people friendly, very clean no litter blowing about, and no fear of returning jihads.

21 hours ago

Cuchulainn

Yeah silver sun, a true workers paradise. The food is EXCELLENT, but only for the fat boy. The ordinary sods live - at best - on starvation rations.

You're right about no litter; how the hell would there be litter when there's nothing to buy in the shops???

They don't need jihads... they've got their secret police and concentration camps to "take care" of them.

As I said in my previous response, if it's so wonderful, why are you still living in the oppressive dictatorship we have here in the West? No matter what lies you try to peddle about Nth Korea, the fact you aren't willing to pack your bags and go live there, shows that basically, you're just full of bovine excrement.

1 day ago

YJJ

USA and Britain with Canada and Australia. Europe is all muddled up aside from Britain.

1 day ago

Ypres1914

the rothchilds, rockerfellas, morgans, chases, soros all nwo leaders and freemasons including darwin have been conjuring up and bum ming evil and demonic spirits for the last 500 years.the nwo are pure evil they control what we are taught, watch, read and all media. we do not have the sense to stop and think for ourselves. question everything, what does 'firmament' mean in Genesis? also four corners of the earth. nasa in hebrew means deceiver, we are all being hoodwinked.

(edited)1 day ago

Cuchulainn

"nasa in hebrew means deceiver"

That's rubbish mate. Actually in Hebrew, "nasa" means to lift up or to carry. Nasha is the word for deceiver, but hey... no need to let facts get in the way of a load of codswallop!

1 day ago

MarieSingewald

will we have activated a50 by then? lets start a book running?odds anyone?

1 day ago

smile

Yet another doom prophecy. We seem to get one a week I'm shaking in my shoes.

1 day ago

Anti DM Dave

Many of these apocaliptic prophesies talk of the end of days. It's not seeing mankind disappear off the face of the Earth. What it really means is a major change in civilisation, and/or Empires falling. Many Empires have come and gone over the centuries, including the British Empire, but in our case, it transformed into a "Commonwealth" of Nations, mainly consisting of all our old Colonies who in the main are totally independent of us.

What we are currently seeing (IMO) unless there is a serious halt put on it, is the fall of Europe as we know it, and the rise of a Middle Eastern Cult to take its place....this should be resisted at all costs, because ultimately that could drag us back to the middle ages, countering a 1,000 years of a unique Northern Hemisphere Culture and customs, not to mention the brilliance of many inventions and advances we have brought to the World, much of this will be overturned if they get their paws fully on us.

1 day ago

The Reno

IMO. I find all these predictions are mainly just Pie in the sky, and never come to fruition.

That includes yours Dave.

1 day ago

Anti DM Dave

I take it you're a Religous nut job, who seriously believes in this nonsense, especially if it can be linked to the fairtale religious books whatever faith it may be.

1 day ago

The Reno

And you get all of that from one of your own quotes.

I was actually marvelling at the irony of your own amusing attempt to predict the future.

The irony tickles me.

17 hours ago

Anti DM Dave

couldn't see the humour/sarcasm in my so-called prediction. Somehow I don't think there's much hope for you mate!

15 hours ago

The Reno

Oh this just gets better your prediction is supposed to be humorous & sarcastic?

You are funny, thanks Dave.

14 hours ago

Anti DM Dave

@the Reno.....Never mind old son, move on a get yourself a life.

13 hours ago

The Reno

Is bet your arse is furious now that your head has moved in.

13 hours ago

Anti DM Dave

@The Reno......If it has, then it speaks more sense that what emits from your rear end where your head resides. Btw.... would you "also" be "Say no to Racists"? He's an annoying P r i c k as well.

4 hours ago

Anti DM Dave

Hey Reno! I get the impression you are budding comedian. Maybe a career on the stage is for you....."SWEEPING IT"

4 hours ago

The Reno

Very nostalgic that auntie Dave. Did you get it from the bible.

And after I have finished sweeping the stage I will wipe the floor with you.

Come on Auntie D something original.

You can do it love.

4 hours ago

The Reno

If your arse moved into your head no one would notice not even your head.

I guess when your looking at your body building videos an annoying p r i ck will always turns up. Come on Dave this is to easy where is this humour /sarcasm you were banging on about before. Better still some originality & sharpness or have you peaked too early looking at them musclebound vidz?

1 day ago

Anti DM Dave

I find all these predictions are mainly just Pie in the sky, and never come to fruition......2012 or the Millenium bug anyone?

But I'll stick my neck out here and make my own prediction......The remainiacs will still be whinging and whining until possibly the day they pop their Clogs.

1 day ago

JohnB4

It's already happened in Europe; it's an ISLAMIC TERRORIST APOCALYPSE that is taking the form of a STEALTH INVASION of psychopathic Islamic terrorist mass murderers, hidden among an army of barbaric, misogynistic, homophobic army of 'so called migrants' that Merkel and her allies (George Soros (the original Dr. Evil); Saudi Arabia, et al) have INVITED into our countries.

Make no mistake it's an ISLAMIC APOCALYPSE; AND we are paying a costly price.

1 day ago

DavidSmith8

We're still awaiting the Brexit apocalypse.

1 day ago

EvadYasdnil

Cant we have it this year. Saves all the problems of leaving the EU

1 day ago

surfcityrockers

What problems?

1 day ago

Dea

The 'End of the World' has been nigh for thousands of years. I suppose one day it will be right but I'm not holding my breath.

1 day ago

Ash123

Nonsense.

1 day ago

through the looking glass

not so according the the seer Baba Vaga

1 day ago

Ex Jack

Are they sure its due to the eclipse, I thought Brexit was to blame, maybe that's the date May will submit her article 50 notice

1 day ago

Boris or Nigel for PM

I'm still waiting for 2012

1 day ago

theoldfellow

Actually the end of the world was last Friday. Did you blink and miss it?

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West Papuan tribe chief holding mummified remains of Dani tribe leader

dailymail.co.uk



MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

The hidden mountain tribe in Papua where villagers mummified their ancestors with SMOKE and have kept their remains in a nearly perfect state for hundreds of years

 A Dani tribe chief has been photographed carrying the smoked mummified remains of his

ancestor

- Eli Mabel is holding the remains of Agat Mamete Mabel in the village of Wogi in Wamena in West Papua
- The indigenous tribe live in a remote area of the Papuan central highlands
- Mummification process isn't used today but some ancestors are preserved from hundreds of years ago
- The tribe was discovered accidentally by American zoologist and philanthropist Richard Archbold in 1938

By Ashleigh Davis For Daily Mail Australia

Published: 08:46 EST, 14 August 2016 | Updated: 16:42 EST, 14 August 2016

Extraordinary photos have emerged showing a tribe chief holding the perfectly mummified remains of one of his ancestors in a remote Indonesian village.

Dani tribe chief Eli Mabel is pictured holding the remains of Agat Mamete Mabel in the village of Wogi in Wamena in West Papua, an island in the centre of Papua New Guinea.

The indigenous tribe, who live in a remote area of the Papuan central highlands, used to preserve their ancestors by smoking their bodies, which kept them in a near-perfect state for hundreds of years.



Dani tribe chief Eli Mabel is pictured holding the remains of Agat Mamete Mabel in the village of Wogi in Wamena in West Papua, an island in the centre of Papua New Guinea

The indigenous tribe, who live in a remote area of the Papuan central highlands, used to preserve their ancestors by smoking their bodies, which kept them in a near-perfect state for hundreds of years

The smoking mummification is no longer practiced, but the Dani tribes people still

preserve a number of mummies as a symbol of their highest respect for their ancestors.

In recent years the Dani tribe has attracted tourists from around the world, with some villages even showing their original customs and holding mock wars.



Every August the Dani hold mock battles with neighbouring tribes - the Lani and Yali peoples - to celebrate the fertility and welfare of the Papua province as well as upholding ancient traditions.

The people of Baliem Valley, the Dani, Lani and Yali tribes, were discovered accidentally by American zoologist and philanthropist Richard Archbold, while on a zoological expedition to New Guinea in 1938.

In the Dani tribe, the men wear distinctive

tribal attire, including face paint, feathers, animal bones and intricate penis sheaths named Koteka.

The women wear skirts made from woven orchid fibres decorated with straw and woven bags, worn from the head, named 'noken'.

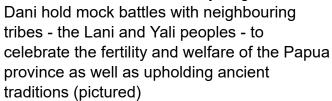


The smoking mummification is no longer practiced, but the Dani tribes people still preserve a number of mummies as a symbol of their highest respect for their ancestors



The Dani tribe is also notorious for following the custom that if someone dies in the village such as the mummified tribe leader (pictured), then each of his female relatives will have a segment of their finger cut off

Every August the



A Dani tribesman is pictured participating in a mock tribal war in Walesi district in Wamena, Papua Province

Two Dani tribeswomen are pictured participating in the 27th annual Baliem Valley Festival in Walesi district in Wamena







The women (pictured) wear skirts made from woven orchid fibres decorated with straw and woven bags, worn from the head, named 'noken'

The Dani men (pictured taking part in the annual festival) wear distinctive tribal attire, including face

paint, feathers, animal bones and intricate penis sheaths named Koteka

Dani tribe men perform a mock tribal war in Walesi district in Wamena, Papua Province

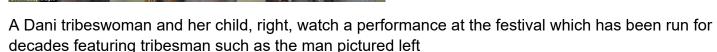
Performances at the 27th Baliem Valley Festival, taking place from August 8 to 10, feature mock battles of highland tribes of Dani, Yali and Lani

The festival performances symbolise the high spirit and power that have been practised for generations by the tribes

Two Dani tribal children are pictured taking part in the tribal festival which feature mock battles of the three tribes

This Dani tribesman participated in the festival performances with a spear and bone-made dagger

A Dani tribesman plays a 'pikon' traditional musical instrument during the 27th annual Baliem festival



In recent years the Dani tribe has attracted tourists from around the world, with some villages even showing their original customs and holding mock wars

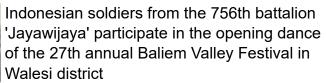
Covered in only ceremonial beads, flowers and headdresses, as well as strategically placed pieces of carved wood, these men take in the festival's atmosphere

The keeping of traditions and customs is fundamental to the tribespeople's way of life









The people of Baliem Valley, the Dani, Lani and Yali tribes, were discovered accidentally by American zoologist and philanthropist Richard Archbold

Tribesmen and women mingle with the crowds that gathered the watch the event in Walesi district in Wamena, Papua

American zoologist and philanthropist Richard Archbold, was on a zoological expedition to New Guinea in 1938 when he discovered the tribes

A group of men show off their traditional dancing as they gather for the 27th annual Baliem Valley Festival

This year the festival was held on August 8-10 in Wamena, Walesi Sub-district, Jayawijaya District, Papua

Traditional clothing was worn by those taking part while the men carried weapons including spears and bows

This aborigine looks like he has seen it all before as he takes part in the mock dance during the festival

This archer is all ready to go as he lines up to take a shot during the Baliem Valley Festival

Indonesian soldiers from the 756th battalion 'Jayawijaya' participate in the opening dance

S AFP Cetty Impass



Hundreds of Papuanese people along with tourists watch the 27th annual Baliem Valley Festival

The event took place under the watchful eye of Indonesian army soldiers who patrolled the fesitval

The comments below have not been moderated.

annielandrum, New York, United States, about 4 hours ago



TodoLFC, Pamplona, Spain, about 5 hours ago

Have you met the wife?

Benny, Hill country, about 6 hours ago

1. Can we perha..... :-))) 2. Love the protective gear, must try it out around Marble Arch.....

lakotahope, Richmond-Virginia USA, United States, about 10 hours ago

Agat Mamete Mabel is immortalized. But, no doubt old Agat has seen better days! The World is still a fascinating place, but one day, humans will be so homogenized, that we will look, talk, act and be nearly identical in too many ways to count!

john p sullivan, tenino thurston county WA USA, United States, about 11 hours ago

strategically placed pieces of carved wood









Nic

Crovaix, somewhere, Australia, about 12 hours ago

Over there when they describe a female as "smoking hot" it would be a big mistake to expect some sexy babe in a bikini.

shadow8131, london, United Kingdom, about 13 hours ago

Why don't they leave these people in peace, All we do is spread our diseases to these remote tribes banjo99, moonbase alpha, United Kingdom, about 13 hours ago

Dead mans plums.









moonbase alpha, United Kingdom, about 13 hours ago

An odd definition of `nearly perfect`.

Mike, Malta, about 13 hours ago

I would not like to be invites to Sunday roast with these boys.

Mike, Malta, about 13 hours ago

Sorry, typo. That should be invited.

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Brexit supporters want British passports without French words there's one major flaw

metro.co.uk

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Dave Burke for Metro.co.ukSaturday 6 Aug 2016 11:01 am



Brexit supporters want British passports without French words - there's However, in the age of Twitter know-it-allism, one major flaw

Outrageous, apparently (Picture: Jeff Overs/BBC News & Current Affairs via Getty)

The French language has no place on a British passport and should be struck off, Brexit supporters have told the government in no uncertain terms.

They believe that removing phrases 'Dieu et mon droit' and 'Honi qui mal y pense' will help us 'take back control', and a petition has been launched to further this cause.

this was never going to go unchallenged.

Why?

Because the word 'passport' is itself a French word.

The petition states: 'The vote to leave the EU means people voted to Take Back Control. Control of their borders, their culture and their language. Whether 'Dieu et mon droit' and 'Honi qui mal y pense' have existed as mottos in England for ages is irrelevant. French is an EU language and has no place on a UK passport.'

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Harry Readhead for Metro.co.ukSaturday 13 Aug 2016 8:48 am Peanut butter spread in Canadian playgrounds



Toronto parents have raised concerns following reports that someone is smearing peanut butter on swings, slides and play equipment in the city's parks, risking the safety of children with an allergy.

A city official said that since June they had received reports that peanut butter had been smeared in playground equipment in Carleton Park, Perth Square, Hillcrest Park and Dufferin Grove Park.

Parents said they were shocked to learn that someone would endanger the lives of allergic children.

'I'm flabbergasted that someone would endanger the lives of children at a children's park,' one parent told CTV News.



Parents concerned after peanut butter is smeared in playgrounds

Peanut butter has been found in four parks across Toronto (Picture: CTV) One parent said they were 'flabbergasted' (Picture: CTV)

'Perhaps it's just some teenagers just being silly, not realizing the consequences of their actions,' added another.

Food Allergy Canada said: 'Given that even a small amount of peanut butter, if ingested, could cause a serious allergic reaction and be potentially lifethreatening, it is a upsetting situation for everyone.'

Around 167,000 Canadian children under 18 are affected by peanut allergies, according to Food Allergy Canada.

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Russian archaeologists uncover ancient Persian stele inscribed with a message from King Darius I

theartnewspaper.com

THE ART NEWSPAPER

Discovery in Phanagoria, the ancient Greek site near Crimea, is of "international significance"

by Sophia Kishkovsky | 8 August 2016



Remains of the walls of the ancient fortifications at Phanagoria

An archeological expedition sponsored by the Russian billionaire Oleg Deripaska has announced the discovery of a stele with a signature in the name of Persian King Darius I in the center of Phanagoria, the remains of an ancient Greek city near Crimea and the Black Sea.

Vladimir Kuznetsov, the director of the Phanagoria Historical and Archeological Museum-Preserve and of the Phanagoria expedition of the Institute of Archeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences described it as a landmark find that "is without exaggeration a discovery of international significance". Another discovery, of the ruins of ancient fortifications that researchers have preliminarily dated to "no later than" the end of the

sixth century BC (destroyed earlier than the middle of the fifth century BC) "can become a phenomenon in classical archeology for the entire Mediterranean and Black Sea region".

The writing on the marble fragment is in ancient cuneiform used only by the Persian king, according to a press release issued by Deripaska's Volnoe Delo Foundation. Researchers estimate that around 10%-15% of the message has survived and that "the deciphered parts of the inscription make it clear that it was made on behalf of the famous king Darius I," who lived from 550-486 BC.

Kuznetsov says that the inscription is "evidently devoted to the crushing of the Ionian revolt" and places Phanagoria "in the context of one of the most important events of ancient history, which had far-reaching consequences for the Greeks as well as the Persians, and makes is possible to trace the connections of this colony with other parts of the Greek world and analyze its significance in advancing Hellenistic civilization on the Black Sea coast."

A report on a separate Volnoe Delo-sponsored website devoted exclusively to Phanagoria says that one of the words in the inscription is "Miletus", the name of the ancient Greek city in Ionia that was at the forefront of the revolt against Darius. Researchers surmise that Darius put up a marble stele to mark his victory and a fragment of it was later brought by ship to Phanagoria.

Volnoe Delo's statement notes that most of the approximately 200 Persian royal inscriptions known today were uncovered in Persepolis.

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The Peruvian temple that hints at the origin of religion

By William Park 11 August 2016 bbc.com

B B C The Peruvian temple that hints at the origin of religion



(Credit: John Rick)

ASSOCIATION WITH

A lost temple could teach us about how modern society is structured.

Chavin de Huantar lies in a narrow valley in the high Andes, 3,200m (10,500ft) above sea level. You can't see the temple until you're in it. The dramatic, vertical landscape was the carefully chosen location for this exquisite example of Chavin architecture. The bottom of the valley, where two rivers meet, dominates the flat land around it and would have attracted visitors from miles around.

The temple, now protected as a Unesco World Heritage Site, is thought to have first been occupied around 5,000 years ago, becoming a cultural centre for people living in ancient Peru in about 1,000BC.

"Chavin was built in a risky spot, in a highly flood-prone location," explains John Rick, associate professor of anthropology, Stanford. "They were aware of the risk of floods and they built towards these risks and not away from them. The monumentality was not only to impress visitors but also to tell them that the creators were capable of challenging nature successfully. And they did very well with it."

Local leaders would bring expert workers with them who could help to construct these intricate temples (Credit: John Rick)

It's not the biggest site of its kind, but probably contains the most interesting secrets. Structures 25m (82ft) high surround a platform the size of a football pitch. Exposed granite stonework is adorned with art. Someone seeing it for the first time could not fail to be impressed.

The centre of the temple is a world apart. A complex of underground spaces and tunnels transported visitors into a place where their minds would be very susceptible to ritual activity, sound and visual effects. The priests at Chavin seemed able to produce experiences with no rational explanation. To the uninitiated, their powers raised them to a level of demi-god.

IN



(Credit: John Rick)

They were using hydraulics, acoustics, mirrors, psychoactive drugs – John Rick

Lost in a labyrinth of underground tunnels lit by sunlight, adorned with stone carvings that appear to roar at passers-by, water that rushed up to meet them, visitors would have been completely disoriented by the experience. "It was a convincing system," says Rick. "And it pushed the innovation of advanced

technology. They were using hydraulics, acoustics, mirrors, psychoactive drugs. They made water dance and sing by its motion through canals. The creators of the temple were pushing their scientific understanding forwards. This is a way of showing off but in a very serious – cultic – sense."



(Credit: John Rick)

The Lanzon monolith is the centrepiece of the temple. Carved to represent a great, fanged beast, only the most important people ever saw it (Credit: John Rick)

The hallucinogenic drugs came from several indigenous cactus species. "We have representations of the plants with people carrying the cactus. In the same stone art we see the effects. A number of the plants are taken as snuffs – it's very irritating. We have representation of

mucus flow, wide staring eyes and other features like pain which can be matched with drug users still using these drugs in the Amazon basin. And we have paraphernalia; snuffing tubes, tablets, mortars.

"The drugs fit hand in glove with what was going on at Chavin. They were credibility drugs, they're not the most extreme where you're completely out of your world – the users weren't catatonic. You live with them and become more impressionable. They're ideal for this system."

So who were these people travelling from far and wide to a remote, inaccessible plateau high in the Andes for the sole purpose of being initiated through a labyrinthine temple by god-like priests? The answer lies in what they brought with them, and what they hoped to take away.

No system is completely stable – they're all strategies to get us to invest in someone and it all started with simple belief systems – John Rick

At the time, anyone in a position of power in a village or local political system was looking for a way to reinforce their authority. Military power was not very effective – local leaders only had control over so many people and power in warring cultures was likely to change hands frequently, and bloodily.

The solution, suggests Rick, was to have your people buy into a belief system, and to show them that your power was ordained from above. "This was the beginning of organised government," says Rick. "No system is completely stable – they're all strategies to get us to invest in someone and it all started with simple belief systems."

There's evidence that visitors from far away came here – objects brought here from at least 500km (310 miles), "which at the time would be an extraordinary distance to travel," says Rick. "This leads us to think the people that came here were important figures. This was a cult for the secondary elite who were now emerging and for whom Chavin fit very well in their world view."

Visitors would be asked for contributions of labour to show their commitment to the cult. Local leaders would bring expert workers with them who could help to construct these intricate temples. There's evidence of exquisite pottery and stone work from far away. In return, only the leaders would be permitted to enter the temple. The more important you were, or the more you could offer the cult, the further into the temple you could pass in a kind of initiation ceremony. By doing so, they were committing themselves to the cult, and being touched by the god-like powers of the priests. "This was a conspiracy, you could almost say, of people working in league with each other and Chavin impressed them."

Rick thinks there might have been eight to 20 major cult centres in the central Andes competing with each other for followings. It was the purpose of the centres to develop technology that would impress people. For example, there's another site to the north with evidence of gold, which Chavin doesn't have. This other site might have impressed visitors with their ability to control light.



(Credit: John Rick)

Sealed for thousands of years, Chavin de Huantar has avoided the worst of decay and looting (Credit: John Rick)

"What makes Chavin special is that the priesthood left an excellent record," says Rick. "This stage in society is generally not well recorded – many of these formative periods are destroyed and rarely do we see it so well preserved. When Chavin fell as a cultural system there wasn't much damage. The

underground spaces were effectively sealed up."

By studying the origins of sites like Chavin de Huantar, Rick hopes to show that modern belief systems began from similar origins. "There are parallels all over the modern world where complex systems developed. There's nothing intrinsically human about authority structures. They're created and we believe in them so they continue to exist. All privilege groups are belief systems.

It would seem that the things that are used to impress us today were exactly what impressed the people at Chavin thousands of years ago

"If we look at our society with an understanding of where authority comes from it makes our own symbols and architecture more understandable," Rick says. "Basic symbols like flags – dynasties,

countries. How many company presidents – or country presidents for that matter – come to power through subtle group activities, actions, images that convince people they have the right to run the show and have salaries 1,000 times greater than their workers? We believe in it because we don't have revolutions every day in our companies. We all have the belief system that hierarchies are credible."

It would seem that the things that are used to impress us today; huge state monuments, demonstrations of wealth or power, were exactly what impressed the people at Chavin thousands of years ago. And Rick says you can still feel the effects today.

"The things that were built into the site to make it impressive then, still are impressive now. When we walk into the site to excavate, the feelings of awe and privilege and fascination is not purely of our own invention. We're still getting the message from these priests 3,000 years ago. It emphasises common ideas. We're not different from humans 3,000 years ago. When you put something in the ground or on the ground, the ceremonies keep going on. Just not in ways they could ever have dreamed of."

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William Park is BBC Future's social media producer. He tweets at @williamhpark.

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Phallic symbol of Volgograd airport erased prior to Putin's arrival

16.08.2016 | Source: Pravda.Ru pravdareport.com





Phallic symbol of Volgograd airport erased prior to Putin's arrival. 58641.jpeg

Source: Instagram

The administration of the airport of Volgograd was forced to paint out the stylized "famous" inscription "Letet" ("Лететь" in Cyrillic, translates as "to fly") on a wall of one of the halls of the airport building.

Many people naturally saw a phallic symbol in the inscription at the Volgograd airport. However, the image of the male reproductive organ was corrected prior to the arrival of President Vladimir Putin.

Putin is expected to arrive in the city to hold the meeting of the presidium of the State Council for the development of inland waterways.

The international terminal of the Volgograd airport was officially opened on August 10. Many people immediately saw a phallic symbol in the inscription on a wall of one of the halls of the airport building.

The graphic received the attention of local media outlets as well. "The words "To Fly "and "To dream" on the walls, interconnected by squiggling lines, look cool, airy and romantic, as airport art is supposed to look. Yet, some people saw a penis in those lines. We did not pay any attention to it at first, but when we came across discussions on social media, we were surprised to see a penis there as well. Indeed, when one looks at the photos on the Internet, one can't but see a penis there," The Volga Daily newspaper wrote.

Local residents used the airport art for a variety of jokes and photoshopped fun photos. However, on the eve of Putin's visit to the airport, the airy penis of the Volgograd airport has become history.

Read article on the Russian version of Pravda.Ru

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Michael Phelps Tied A 2,168-Year-Old Olympic Record

deadspin.com Barry Petchesky

http://deadspin.com/michael-phelps-tied-a-2-168-year-old-olympic-record-1785077553



Photo credit: Michael Sohn/AP Images

Another two golds last night for Michael Phelps, the most decorated American Olympian ever: That makes 21 gold medals in his career, 25 medals overall, and with his win in the 200m butterfly—a particularly personal win, given his loss in that event four years ago—Phelps now has 12 individual wins to bring him into a tie with the late, great **Leonidas** of Rhodes.

Olympic historian Bill Mallon pulled out this beauty of a factoid, and there's no reason to doubt it: the IOC is good at keeping stats and the Classical and Hellenistic-era Greeks weren't bad either. Leonidas of Rhodes was a sprinter, apparently one of the best

who ever lived, according to the mostly complete Olympic records first compiled by Hippias of Elas and updated and revised by later scholars.

The starting line at the ancient stadium, Olympia, Greece. Photo credit: Panagiotis Milonas/Getty Images

At the 154th Olympiad, held in 164 BCE, Leonidas completed the "triple," winning the stadion sprint (about 200 meters*), the diaulos (twice the length of the stadion), and the hoplitodromos, a diaulos with the runners wearing a helmet and greaves and carrying a shield, the armor weighing more than 50 pounds.

*The stadion was not a fixed length, but instead varied based on the length of the stadium was being used. At Olympia, that was 192.27 meters. The dialous was simply "there and back."

Then Leonidas won the triple at the next three Olympic Games, in 160 BCE, 156 BCE, and 152 BCE. As Pausanias tells us, Leonidas, "the most famous runner...maintained his speed at its prime for four Olympiads, and won twelve victories for running."

Leonidas must have been a true superstar in the eastern Mediterranean; the events in which he competed and won were among the most popular and most important an the ancient Olympics. The stadion traditionally opened each games, and the hoplitodromos closed them. Here, please enjoy(?) members of the 2010 Apollon Boedromia Symposium in Melbourne, Australia, reenacting the hoplitodromos. And yes, for maximum authenticity, they are nude.

The Encyclopedia of the Modern Olympic Movement confirms that Leonidas's 12 wins (he was awarded wreaths, not medals), is an Olympic record, ancient or modern. Well, it was his Olympic record for a couple millennia-plus. Michael Phelps has tied him, and has two more chances to surpass him: the 200m individual medley on Thursday, and the 100m butterfly on Friday.

Still, I'd like to see Phelps do this while wearing armor.

Barry Petcheskybarryp@deadspin.com@barryap1

Deputy editor

 The Dread & Fear of KingsBarry Petchesky 8/10/16 9:14am

more like Leonidas of 'Roids

 MattyBaconBarry Petchesky 8/10/16 9:17am

I believe 164 BCE was also the last time a Buffalo sports team was in the playoffs.

 Hemmerling for MitchellBarry Petchesky 8/10/16 9:18am

Doesn't count. Everyone who is an actual fan of the Olympics knows that Leonidas is the GOAT. He didn't have all the fancy accommodations that Olympians have now, like shoes and anti-chaffing nipple tape. Do you know what they did back then if your chaffed nips got infected? They took'em.



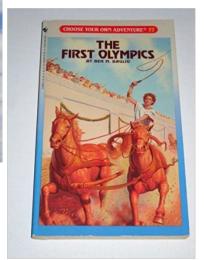
 Mookie BumbaclotBarry Petchesky 8/10/16 9:21am

Here's Leonidas' dick and balls.



 Deadspin StaphBarry Petchesky 8/10/16 9:25am

This reminds me of quite possibly the greatest "Choose Your Own Adventure" book ever written:



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After Obama Controversy, Philippine President Threatens to Eat Islamist Militants Alive

yahoo.com

September 6, 2016



After insulting Obama, the Philippine president said he would eat militants alive if he manages to catch them.

It seems that whenever recently elected Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has the chance to speak publicly, he just can't suppress his overwhelming desire to call other world leaders as "sons of bitches."

In May, he used the expression to describe Pope Francis after the pontiff's visit caused a traffic jam in the capital of Manila. In August,

he said the U.S. ambassador to the Philippines was "gay" and the "son of a whore" because the diplomat criticized Duterte's suggestion he would have liked to have been the first to rape a missionary who was gang raped and killed in the president's hometown of Davao in the 1980s. And this weekend, he threw the same insult U.S. President Barack Obama's way, prompting Obama to cancel a meeting the two had scheduled in Laos this week. His reasoning? Obama criticized his shoot-to-kill policy for drug dealers, which has left more than 2,000 dead since June.

As with most times Duterte says something so offensive that it requires a public apology, his office released a written statement to try to clear up the mess.

"While the immediate cause was my strong comments to certain press questions that elicited concern and distress, we also regret it came across as a personal attack on the U.S. president," Duterte said in a statement. "Our primary intention is to chart an independent foreign policy while promoting closer ties with all nations, especially the U.S., with which we have had a long-standing partnership."

But it didn't take long for Duterte to find another podium and take things too far once again — this time threatening to not only execute Islamist militants loyal to terrorist organization Abu Sayyaf, but to eat them alive. "They will pay. When the time comes, I will eat you in front of people," he said Monday. "If you make me mad, in all honesty, I will eat you alive, raw...I will really carve your torso open. Give me vinegar and salt and I will eat you."

The controversial president has caused a stir at home in the Philippines, where Duterte has repeatedly said he would kill anyone — including his own children — if he thinks they are using drugs. After the U.N criticized his tough response, Duterte came up with a simple solution: threatening on Aug. 21 to leave the world body if it tries to police him at home again. That's left his administration's appointees and aides scrambling to issue apologies at a press conference, explaining that Duterte only made the remarks because he was "tired, disappointed, hungry."

"We must give him leeway," Foreign Affairs Secretary Perfecto Yasay Junior said the next day. "He is also human."

In an interview with al Jazeera last month, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella admitted the job of constantly defending Duterte is a tough one, but also said some of the president's most offensive remarks sound so aggressive because of translation difficulties.

"I understand that's why my task is to be able to interpret him and act as a conduit and bring out the true intention of the president," Abella said.

So far, the strategy of immediately apologizing on his behalf seems to work. On Tuesday, the White House said that while a formal meeting is now off the books, Obama may meet informally with Duterte while attending a summit in Laos.

"I would not expect a formal bilateral meeting, but I think we'll have an opportunity to interact with him, as with all leaders," U.S. Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes told reporters on Tuesday.

Photo credit: Lam Yik Fei/Getty Images

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Philly fish fall: Catfish from above slightly injures woman

doubtfulnews.com



September 11, 2016 • 0 Comments

Lisa Lobree told the Philadelphia Inquirer that she was walking near the art museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on the morning of September 5th when she heard a rustling in the trees above and 16 inch long catfish fell on her head cutting her face.

The headline was "Woman says catfish fell from sky, striking her near Art Museum" which suggests that this was a mysterious event. It's weird but quite non-mysterious. A bird had caught the fish, and it slipped out of its grasp. The museum is adjacent to the Schuylkill River which undoubtable contains catfish. Ms. Lobree was standing in the unfortunate spot to get the full-on impact of the fish that may have weighed 5 lbs. It could have been worse, she said. Probably not much worse for the unfortunate fish though.

Had this been a desert area, a falling fish would have been of a greater unlikelihood but fish-catching birds transporting their catches to a quiet spot is frequent around rivers. The size of the fish indicates it was a tough carry, perhaps too much for even the raptors, including eagles, around the area. Wait for someone to remark on this event as an omen for the upcoming football season.

Single fish that seemingly fall out of nowhere can be reasonably attributed to birds losing their lunch but mystery mongering sites may prefer to supply a less rational explanation.

Thanks to Chip Denman for the tip: "One more thing to worry about..."

idoubtit

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Free pizza 'more motivational than cash' if you want staff to work harder

telegraph.co.uk



Want to motivate your employees to get more work done? According to a recent study, offering them free pizza could be more effective than the promise of a cash bonus.

In an new book, Payoff: The Hidden Logic That Shapes Our Motivations, psychologist Dan Ariely details an experiment he conducted among workers at a factory in Israel.

Staff at the plant were sent messages at the beginning of the week telling them they'd receive a particular reward if they got a certain amount of work done.

One group of workers were told they'd receive a bonus of around \$30 if they completed the work. A second group were promised a voucher for a free pizza. A third group would receive a text message from their boss at the end of the week congratulating them. As a control, a fourth group weren't offered any particular incentive.

As a report in New York Magazine details, as the week-long experiment got underway, the free pizza proved to be a more powerful motivator than the money – the pizza group showed a 6.7 per cent increase in productivity, against the money group's 4.9 per cent increase.

However, by the end of the week the pizza group had slipped into second place behind the group promised a congratulatory text message, who showed the highest increase in productivity overall.

Perhaps more surprisingly, the group offered cash ended up in fourth place, behind the control group.

The results indicate that making staff feel appreciated at work is key if you want them to put in a good performance.

As psychology professor Adam Grant told *The Wall Street Journal* last year: "Extrinsic motivators can stop having much meaning — your raise in pay feels like your just due, your bonus gets spent, your new title doesn't sound so important once you have it.

"But the sense that other people appreciate what you do sticks with you."

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Pokemon, just go: France doesn't want creatures in schools

yahoo.com

AP Associated PressAugust 29, 2016

PARIS (AP) — Attention, legendary Pokemon creatures: You may soon be expelled from the schools of France.

The education minister, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, said Monday that the makers of the popular "Pokemon Go" smartphone game should stop beaming their most avidly hunted Pokemon figures into real-life schools.

She has told a Paris news conference that she intends to meet representatives of California-based Niantic Inc. to explain that the game entices non-students to wander into children's schools. She sees the guest for rare, or "legendary," characters as posing the greatest security risk of unwanted walk-ins by strangers.

France remains in an official state of emergency following November attacks in Paris and last month's Nice truck massacre.

She says principals already can apply online for Niantic to remove their school from the game's global map.

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By Karl Pfieffer on 07/08/2016 weekinweird.com



Week In Weird

HOW POKEMON GO
IS HAUNTING THE WORLD
WITH DIGITAL SPIRITS

pokemon-go-haunting-the-world-feature

moment of awe regarding the game.

A World of Digital Spirits: How Pokémon GO Has Haunted the Planet With Online Ghosts

It's nearly midnight, and I'm on campus at a University in Colorado, preparing for

the arrival of campers for a yearly two week summer camp I work at each year. It's a place where spontaneous conversations about the nature of the universe aren't uncommon. It's a place where all things nerdy and different are celebrated. And it's a place where this new Pokémon GO phenomena is sweeping through the staff as we wrap up our training week.

Though I'm a Millennial, I'm not a big Pokémon guy. Nor am I a big mobile-gamer. Directing the night side of a summer camp takes up too much time right now anyway. But, with the release of Pokémon GO today, crashing servers and sweeping the world, I couldn't help but have a

See, if you're not familiar with it, **Pokémon GO is an interactive game for your smart phone**, which uses your GPS location and camera to insert Pokemon into your environment for capture, and scatters objects and creatures around, well, the world.

You play by studying a GPS map overview that informs you where nearby Pokémon are before you get close, and then switches to camera mode, which overlays the Pokemon onto your environment, and you capture it with a swipe of the thumb. The game apparently expands into something about gyms and battles, some kind of contest between red and blue teams, and by all appearances it seems HIGHLY addictive.

No, really.

As I'm sitting here in the common room of a campus residence hall, my staff members are running in and out, shouting things like, "Chuck caught a Dratini that was in a mirror!" Earlier, as I stood outside chatting, eight staff members went speed-walking toward the far side of campus hoping to catch an Abra. Two minutes later, a local couple wandered up the sidewalk beside us, staring at their phones. "You playing Pokémon?" our staff member Jake asked. "Yep," they answered, laughing.

Clearly the game is a massive success. It comes from a mobile game development company, Niantic Inc., who was behind the hit augmented reality game *Ingress*, which briefly came across my radar when it hit iOS in 2014. What I'd heard of the game sounded fascinating, combining real world visuals and references with the purpose of a Massively Multi-player Role Playing Game. It's like Warcraft in the real world.

Ingress didn't seem to last long in the public consciousness, at least as far as I was aware. But today's release of Pokemon GO seems to have utterly re-invigorated the novelty by calling on Millennial nostalgia and deeply clever technology.

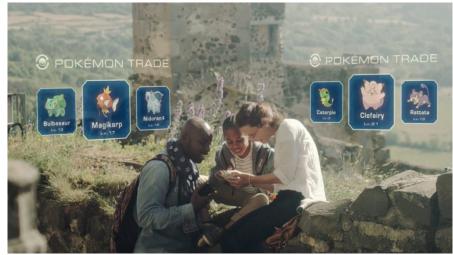
My two assistant administrators just walked in.

"The energy around here is wild tonight!"

"I know," Jenna says. "That group earlier was such — OH!" She looks at her phone. "The grass is puffing!"

It's like I'm in a zombie movie. My trusted administrators have now been infected too. Soon I'll be Legend.

But what stopped me in my tracks earlier this afternoon, upon first hearing of the game, was **the astounding similarities to paranormal investigation**.



fgtv.pokemongoc

While it's true we still don't know what a "ghost" may be, one of the frameworks suggests that they're a spiritual being existing in space around us, just beyond science's careful gaze, all but invisible to most of our senses and detection tools. Paranormal investigators run around with EMF detectors in the dark, hoping for some sign of their "spiritual Pokémon" (if you will), moving from room to room on a mission to capture them... Well, at least on film.

The comparison here being that we've just created an entire world in the air around us. Due to their connection in the

cloud, each person's phone recognizes the same creatures existing objectively in the air around us, and the only way we can interact with these things is via a piece of technology: here, a smartphone.

We can't photograph these things. We can't hear them or glimpse them. But with the right tools — tools that reach BEYOND our five senses, we are able to see them and interact with them.

What sense would this be creating? Our sense of sight obviously recognizes the screen. But, considering the phone as an extension of ourselves and our awareness of the world around us, we now have what we could call a kind of Digital Sense. An Internet Sense? Binary Sense? A sense of the cloud?

And this sense, this extension of our awareness via our smartphones, makes us now AWARE of an entire world that is existing side-by-side at all times. A world that I have no direct awareness of because I'm not extending my senses into that realm (in other words... I'm not planning on downloading the app).





ghostmeter-vs-pokeball

because I believe we've just created "ghosts".

How is this invisible world any less real than the world of EMF waves pulsing invisibly all around us? Certainly the game doesn't physically interact with the world around us. We feel no effects of it. These Pokémon can't touch us.

And certainly there's no consciousness... yet. Artificial Intelligence isn't yet sentient or self-aware. And it would seem that on some level, ghosts are indeed conscious and aware of themselves and those around them. And ghosts do seem to at the very least manifest physically, or interact in a way that can directly effect the physical environment.

So don't get me wrong. I'm not losing my mind

But we've just created Digital Ghosts, and they're now all around us, completely unbeknownst to we who aren't "tapped in."

"Karl, there's a Zubat on your head right now," another counselor, Jace, says dryly, grinning at his phone screen. He captures it with a swipe of his thumb.

"There is a Rattata.... on my pocket," Another counselor, Aaron, says matter-of-factly from where he's sprawled out on a nearby couch.

In many ways, this to me is ground-breaking. Put it in whatever digital context you like. Another step toward more immersive mobile gaming. Another step toward virtual reality, existing solely in the worlds we create. Another step toward something like Tad Williams' *Otherland* or even the now cliché *The Matrix*.

But this to me only serves to reframe our entire perspective of what is around us. Are we simulations in a computer construct, running through scenarios again and again, studied by some god or god-like machine? Have we taken the first step toward running our own invisible simulations in the world around us?

There are hundreds of people running around campus playing this game right now. Aaron notes twenty people he saw on West Campus. Jenna notes a pack of fifteen she saw ten minutes ago exclaiming "Someone just dropped an Incense at the Garden Theater!"

It's like the most adorable horror movie I've ever seen.



pokemon-go-digital-ghosts-haunting

Now, the first level that I gauge whether a paranormal experience is genuine is via validation. An experience had by only one person is questionable. Was it a hallucination? A misunderstanding? A trick of the eye? But when two people witness the same thing, it suggests that the experience was something objective, something existing physically in the world that was witnessed by two people. Science, in the end, is a process of refining objectivity, of peeling away layer after layer, while testing again and again, searching for inconsistencies in their observations.

If we're talking about an entire world, all around us, teeming with creatures invisible to the naked

eye that can be witnessed and validated objectively by two or more people at once...

I mean, for all intents and purposes, have we not just created a world of Digital Spirits?

"It's 12:30... I need to go to bed, but I might play for just a bit more." Aaron mutters to his phone while the sound of guick footsteps and excited laughter floats through the open window.

Karl Pfieffer

2 Comments

1. Drake

07/09/2016 at 1:46 PM

Like all good things, it's only dangerous if you're irresponsible or stupid with it. Chalk it up to other things that are dangerous if unmediated: sex, eating, sports, driving, playing MMOs for hours without moving... Most things we do have opportunity for negative consequences, and most of them only ever hit that point if we, as sentient beings, allow them to.

2. Dan W

07/10/2016 at 8:14 AM

There is a similar type of game that uses ghosts. Called "SpecTrek". I think more people that are interested in Paranormal would play that game.

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Italian bishop says 'diabolical' Pokemon is like 'Nazism'

thelocal.it



The Local

AFP/The Local · 18 Aug 2016, 12:12

Published: 18 Aug 2016 12:12 GMT+02:00

An Italian bishop has threatened legal action against Pokemon Go, saying the "diabolical" game has turned its army of smartphone-wielding players into "walking dead", reports said on Thursday.

Antonio Stagliano, the bishop of the southern town of Noto in Sicily, was quoted by several newspapers as saying he was ready to go to court to get the wildly popular app banned.

The augmented-reality game, which allows players to catch virtual monsters using GPS mapping on their phones, has become a global craze since its launch on July 6th but has also prompted a wave of criticism and controversy.

Stagliano had already lashed out at the game in recent days, declaring it "a totalitarian system close to Nazism" and saying it had "alienated thousands and thousands of young people" by getting them hooked on monsterhunting.

The bishop is well known in the Italian press, particularly for his mid-mass renditions of rock hits by popular singers Noemi and Marco Mengoni.

Last week, a luxury hotel group in Tuscany said it was offering therapy to billionaire guests addicted to the game, which launched in Italy in July.

The Local Italy is owned and operated by: The Local Europe AB Östgötgatan 12, 116 25 Stockholm Sweden

Rome editorial office: Corso d'Italia 29

Roma,

Italy

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Spooky goings on at house including 'levitating chihuahua' have cops baffled

08:20, 13 Aug 2016 Updated 11:32, 13 Aug 2016 By Jane Hamilton

mirror.co.uk

Police left baffled by poltergeist after paranormal events blight family home for two days



The house in Rutherglen, Glasgow, has officers spooked

The house in Rutherglen, Glasgow, has officers spooked

Hardened police officers were left spooked after witnessing bizarre 'paranormal' activity at a family home.

After a call out in Rutherglen, South Lanarkshire officers witnessed clothes flying across a room and lights going off and on.

Lampshades were placed upside down and oven doors were opening and closing.

Even a chihuahua dog which was playing in the garden was then inexplicably discovered sitting on top of a seven-foot hedge.

The family who live at the property had called the police in a panic. They endured two days of the

The situation has been discussed at high levels within Police Scotland, with senior officers perplexed as to how they best handle the incidents.

bizarre occurrences before moving out of the property, report the Daily Record.



Getty

The house in Rutherglen, Glasgow, has officers spooked

A police source said: "These were incidents that were witnessed by our own officers. Incidents that are not easily explained.

"One problem we've got is where we go from here as no crime has been established, so what else can we do but deal with any reports of disturbances.

"But officers with more than 20 years' service are saying they've never seen anything like

this. It really is something that down-to-earth police officers are having trouble getting their heads round.

"How do you handle what, despite us liking to use the word, has been described as a poltergeist."

The family at the centre of the drama are devoutly Catholic and police did seek assistance from the church.

A priest has been to the house in Stonelaw Road and performed what has been described as a 'blessing' at the property.

The saga unfolded when the family, a woman and her son in his early teens, contacted police on Monday and Tuesday to report 'disturbing incidents' in her home.



A chihuahua was found on a hedge in a series of bizarre events

The woman and the teenager, described as extremely distressed, had been experiencing violent and unexplained circumstances and in desperation contacted police.

A source said: "The officers attended expecting it to be a mental health issue but they witnessed the lights going off, clothes flying across the room and the dog sitting on top of the hedge.

"The officers called their superiors who also attended thinking the cops were perhaps being a bit silly but it's being taken very seriously.

"The fact it was witnessed by our officers has lent itself to a very different but active inquiry."

With no reasonable explanation for what they witnessed police, acting with the support of the family, contacted the Catholic Church who sent a priest to bless the house.

No-one has been harmed, though the family were given safety advice by baffled officers and chose to leave the house. They are understood to be living with relatives.

The source added: "The main concern is with the family's welfare and well-being but with no crime committed and no culprit we are at a loss how to proceed with it. Inquiries are ongoing but it's difficult to know where to go with it."

Police are understood to be looking into the family's background, and working with doctors and social services to provide support.

They are also thought to be checking the history of the property, to see if there been any reports of similar occurrences from previous residents.

Our source said all options were being considered by way of explaining the goings-on: "Is it some form of hoax, or is it real or not real? These are the questions being asked by officers but without coming to any conclusion.

A spokesman for Police Scotland said: "On 8 and 9 August police attended a house in Rutherglen to reports of a disturbance. No evidence of criminality was found and advice and guidance was given to the family."

The Catholic Church was approached for comment but failed to respond.

DailyMirror

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Police raid Amish party in Ohio field and arrest 73 people

wkyc.com

Police raid Amish party in Ohio field, arrest 73 people

Associated Press, WKYC10:53 PM. EST September 06, 2016

MILLERSBURG, Ohio (AP) - Authorities in the heart of Ohio's Amish country say they arrested more than 70 people in a raid at a weekend party in a field that was expected to attract hundreds of Amish youth.

More than 40 officers converged Saturday on the Hardy Township field after concerned parents notified the Holmes County sheriff's office of a large party expected to attract over 1,000 Amish from Ohio and neighboring states.

Investigators say 73 people, including 35 juveniles, were taken into custody and charged with underage consumption of alcohol.

The Daily Record of Wooster reports that some also face charges of resisting arrest, and two were taken to a hospital for alcohol related-illness.

The Amish are a Christian sect whose members live a simple lifestyle and shun modern conveniences.



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Roomba creator responds to reports of 'poopocalypse': 'We see this a lot'

Olivia Solon in San Francisco Monday 15 August 2016 Last modified on Tuesday 16 August 2016

thequardian.com

Robotic vacuum cleaner is said to run over animal feces and continue its cleaning cycle around the house, spreading the mess over 'every conceivable surface'



The result is 'a home that closely resembles a Jackson Pollock poop painting', one user said. Photograph: Flickr A diagram of the Roomba 'poopocalypse'. Illustration: Jesse Newton Roomba. Photograph: Katherine Anne Rose for the Observer

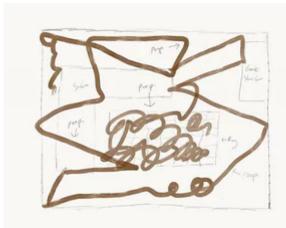
Jesse Newton found out the hard way what happens when a robotic vacuum cleaner encounters a dog turd, and it isn't pretty.

Newton's Roomba is scheduled to clean the living room of his home in Little Rock, Arkansas, at 1.30am each day, so that the family wakes up to a clean space. That all changed this month when his puppy Evie had an accident on the rug during the night, leading to what he described as the "poopocalypse".

As Newton explains in a graphic Facebook post, the Roomba ran over the dog feces and then continued its cleaning cycle around the house, spreading the mess over "every conceivable surface" and resulting in "a home that closely resembles a Jackson Pollock poop painting".

"It will be on your floorboards. It will be on your furniture legs. It will be on your carpets. It will be on your rugs. It will be in your kids' toy boxes. If it's near the floor, it will have poop on it. Those awesome wheels, which have a checkered surface for better traction, left 25ft poop trails all over the house," he said.

Newton was helpful enough to draw a diagram.



A diagram of the Roomba 'poopocalypse'.

It turns out that this isn't an isolated incident.

It's happened to neuroscientist Becca (she didn't want her full name published) between five and 10 times over the past two vears.

She and her husband bought the Roomba to tackle the hair shed by their four cats Aretha, Bert, Merry and Pippin. "It does an amazing job," she said.

That is, until there's a stray cat turd. Sometimes this happens when one of the cats simply misses the litter box, while at other times it's down to the cat having "a little dangling one" that falls off somewhere in the apartment.

"It's awful. The poop gets stuck in these tiny treads in the wheels, gets sucked inside and in all the brushes," Becca explained. "That's on top of the poop smeared all over the house."

Most of the time the mess is concentrated to a small area, something that Becca credits to a feature that leads the Roomba to go over an area repeatedly if it thinks it has detected a particularly dirty spot.

"A couple of weeks ago we had this big asterisk on the floor because the Roomba was going in zigzags trying to get the spot," she said.

Los Angeles marine biologist Jonathan Williams endured a similar trauma. It's happened three times in the past few months, ever since his family moved to a house with their pug, Alice.

The first time it happened he came back from work to find "tread-marks of caked-in poop all over the house".



A diagram of the Roomba 'poopocalypse'. Illustration: Jesse Newton Roomba. Photograph: Katherine Anne Rose for the Observer

The next two times were much worse. "It's almost like [Alice the pug] deliberately left it right in front of its path at the start of the cycle."

The last time it happened, Alice had been out in the morning and evacuated her bowels, lulling Williams and his wife into a false sense of security. "We thought it was safe and we could run it, but it seems like she was storing some up for us."

"Quite honestly, we see this a lot," said a spokesman from iRobot, the company that makes the Roomba.

"We generally tell people to try not to schedule your vacuum if you know you have dogs that may create such a mess. With

animals anything can happen."

Are there any plans to introduce any poop detection technology to the product? "Our engineers are always trying to figure out ways to help people with their problems, and we've known this is an issue people deal with."

He suggests that it might be possible to introduce a specific sensor or feces-specific image recognition.

"I can't say we have the solution yet but it's certainly something our engineers are aware of."

comments

 Jean Martin 3h ago

Hire a cleaner! Seriously! Don't use a robot. Robots can't think. Don't hire a cleaning service. Cleaning services don't pay their employees well enough to do a good job. Hire someone who is working for him or herself, and have them do the cleaning. Leave, clear, concise instructions as to what you want done, and what you don't want done.

 Oprahsue 4h ago

Simply hire a live cleaning person, that is the best cleaning solution. Either that or you're going to have to get rid of your pet. # trash Roomba

· suddenoakdeath 5h ago

This is great. My cat does this without the Roomba.

 dannybee 8h ago

I'm still waiting for an article to nickname the roomba like they do animals. Bishop? HAL?

 Bill Vegas 10h ago

They had it coming. Dogs don't have "accidents" They have owners who haven't even bothered to read a book about how to care for a dog.

 Greg Lanyon Bill Vegas 7h ago

its a euphemism for people who cant say shit even if their house is covered in it.

• Bdavis2 10h ago

Your pets are not suppose to crap in the house. The vacuum should have sucked up the pet.

 Rex Newborn 10h ago

Bought a roomba a few years ago. My Airedale chased it down the first night. Caught it and smeared roomba all over the living room. iRobot refused to replace it even though it was in warranty.

 Stefan Cross 10h ago

It seems they just need to work on the fecial recognition...

joannaelm1 11h ago

I want to thank the Guradian... no, take that back. I want to thank myself for having the good sense to sign up as a supporter of the Guardian so that I get a daily US briefing in my email. Today was unbeatable. Where else could you read an interview with Goebbels' 105-year old secretary who is still alive and reminiscing about working for the monster.... only to be followed by a story about a robot vacuum cleaner that goes out of control and spreads the mess left by the family pet "over every conceivable surface." The first story grabbed me by the throat when the secretary recalled finding out that her Jewish childhood friend had perished in a concentration camp, but only when she made inquiries 60 (!!!!) years after the end of the war. The second story had me rolling around, laughing uncontrollably in genuine mirth.

 Charlie C. 12h ago

I bet this iRobot gets started in the early hours, wakes the dog and freaks it out. So the dog then involuntarily empties its bowels. hahahahaha

 Atlatl2 12h ago

Not quite the Terminator but I guess this will have to suffice for the robot takeover.

 LaborTank 13h ago

Thanks for the laugh! I never thought of this....make sure the dog and the vacuum do not mix.....LOVE IT! I can see it now "I just spent \$500 to spread poop all over my floor" Imagrotf! I can imagine my disdain for one of these things when I cannot stand it if poop hits just a small confined area I feel like the rug is toast...no longer worthy of my home...lol. I also see this problem as even more funny when you look at it in context: A first world problem to be sure! I'm sure if I were in my Rio shanty with dirt floors and rivers of feces flowing just outside my door I would not be so worried. BTW: I boycott the Olympics anytime they are held in a third world country. The USA owes Brazil several trillion dollars.

• gh2010 13h ago

This is the kind of journalism I'd happily pay for, Guardian overlords. I've not laughed as much in ages.

 lafranglaise 14h ago

My son & his wife bought a Roomba. Problem is, they're the messiest couple I ever met (they bought it because they can't be arsed to use a proper vacuum cleaner) I warned them that, because of all the junk on the floor, the poor thing would have a nervous breakdown and sure enough that's exactly what happened - unfortunately for them just outside the warranty period.

 namora 15h ago

A long time ago I was living in a trailer when i didn't securely close my door and went to work. The wind blew the door open and a pair of my neighbors chickens wandered in. The wind then shut the door. The effect was similar but three dimensional in that they also covered every horizontal surface from the top of the refrigerator to the floor under my bed. I stopped feeding those chickens immediately. This article is puzzling in that it describes a small bit of feces being spread like paint over an entire floor of a house. Gold leaf can be hammered out to a thickness close to atomic but I doubt that the vacuum spreader is capable of that. How does it generate such a vast quantity of crap. Are these devices political as well as time saving?

 Ludo Vica 15h ago

there should be a moisture detection sensor so it can avoid wet messes

 PaoloChicago 16h ago

Well, who knew Roomba was in the automated muckspreading business? The agricultural show beckons....

 chris price 16h ago

Just got off the phone with Roomba for my own poopacalypse. They registered my robot and then promptly told me there is no way to fix it, and I must buy a new one at \$500. If any moisture gets on it, it's done for and you are on your own.

 Zoe Emikochris price 15h ago

I'm confused. Why would they absorb the cost of replacement?

 LaborTank Zoe Emiko 13h ago

Ahhh the mindset of a first worlder Zoe. Amazing isn't it?

 C5Av4gEtJ8w5zj4iH61r 16h ago

Nice try, product-placement person! I don't need a Roomba for this. My dog achieves the same effect for free while butt scooting

Ludo Vica C5Av4gEtJ8w5zj4iH61r

Your dog has impacted anal glands if it is doing that. It needs attention from a vet

 HeresJohnny 16h ago

The problem here is not a malfunctioning robot. It is that people voluntarily share their homes with animals who shit everywhere.

 DOCWEASEL 16h ago

Anyone who is stupid enough to own 4 cats deserves to live in a house smeared with catshit. People who have even one cat think their living space doesn't stink of cat shit, but immediatly when you walk in, you can smell it. All that is different here is the degree of contamination. I feel no sympathy for them.

 richafort DOCWEASEL 15h ago

I hope your choice of online name doesn't reflect choice of pet :)

 scot54 DOCWEASEL 14h ago

The same can be said of couples who breed their own little shitters.

 LaborTank DOCWEASEL 13h ago

Ahhh...change your name to "the BitterOne"

 kennethawest 16h ago

It wasn't the puppy it was the "little person" inside the Roomba.

- William Corcoran 17h ago
- Known or Knowable Hazard/ Vulnerability

An inescapable fact is that the competent investigation of every harmful event reveals that the causation of the harm includes the ignorance, denial, discounting, and/or other mismanagement of one or more known or knowable hazards/ vulnerabilities. Often these vulnerabilities are thoroughly, but ineffectively discussed, argued, debated, and otherwise addressed by incompetent and/or intimidated engineers, scientists, and quality professionals.

There are usually many non-harmful instances of competent and/or lucky organizations that abide the same vulnerabilities successfully and whose success is never compared to the respective failure situations.

Observation: An item is failed when it is not suitable for its intended purpose and/or it does not or cannot perform satisfactorily in service.

Observation: Many bridge collapses involve the failure of insufficiently redundant structural elements that were non-transparent or insufficiently transparent. These include the 1981 Kansas City Skywalk, the Silver Bridge, the Mianus River Bridge, and the I-35W Bridge.

Observation: The Flint, Michigan Water Fiasco involved lead in pipes and leaching of pipe material constituents by inadequately treated water.

Observation: The Duodenoscope Infections and Cover-up involved known pathogens and hard-to-clean poorly designed mechanical joints.

Observation: The Volkswagen Dieselgate cheating scandal involved known diesel pollutants and deceivable regulatory requirements.

Observation: The Davis-Besse 2002 Near Miss involved known pure water stress corrosion cracking (PWSCC) and the vulnerability of carbon steel to boric acid corrosion.

Observation: The causation of the Kleen Energy Plant explosion involved the well-known hazards of natural gas in poorly ventilated geometries.

Caution: The existence of a fundamental vulnerability resulted from deeper harmful underlying conditions, behaviors, actions, and/or inactions and thus is usually not a "root cause."

Observation: The death of Joshua Brown while driving his Tesla Model S in the autopilot mode raises questions as to the adequacy of the safe operating envelope recommended by the manufacturer and as to Mr. Brown's adherence to the safe operating envelope. It appears that Mr. Brown did not act as if he was aware of the possibility of his autopilot not recognizing the crossing hazard that resulted in his death.

Observation: The causation of the fatal and expensive pipe elbow mix-up at BP Texas City in July 2005 included the failure to recognize that there was an important difference between the cheap vulnerable elbows and the expensive robust elbow. In most cases the systems drawings spell out such details.

Observation: The causation of the Roomba Dog Feces Distribution Fubar included the failure to recognize that the robotic vacuum cleaner could encounter dog feces. (The Roomba Dog Feces Distribution Fubar illustrates many other inescapables.)

 LaborTank William Corcoran 13h ago

Ok blowhard, you forgot 62,236 other events...lets start with the Space Shuttle (which one? both, dummy), Japan Airlins tail go boom (Boeing), the 737 (while we are on the idea of Boeing) rudder actuator, ahh lemme see..I'll stop before I'm you.

 Rex Newborn William Corcoran 5h ago

Oh get real, every one of these events of "failure" that you describe, along with untold 1000s of others, is an opportunity for litigation, growth of the legal profession, the general economy, and redistribution of wealth. Do you know nothing of the US economy? It thrives on failure. A roomba dog shit case will likely end up in court eventually; and the result could provide employment for a number of people, from redesign engineers and technicians, to HUD inspectors providing regulatory oversight of dog shit on residential floors.

• ID1115216 17h ago

My wife and I had this problem; however, we had no dog. Indeed, we had no pets. It turned out that my spouse was/is a so-called ambulatory sleep defecater. It is an extremely rare behavioral disorder and, so far, has no official medical name. Neither our medical insurance nor our home-owner's insurance would cover the thousands of dollars it cost us over the years to clean up after her until we confined her to the cellar.

 DOCWEASEL ID1115216 16h ago

holy shit, you have a lot more problems than just your roomba malfunction, you sure she isn't doing it on purpose to graphically and literally illustrate her opinion of your marriage?

o scot54 ID1115216 14h ago

Is this related to the sleeping on the toilet syndrome?

• Rex Newborn

17h ago

I have had house dogs for more than 50 years and have housebroken many puppies. I don't recall ever going to bed with dog shit on the floor, and puppies should be crated during sleeping hours. For a homeowner that is this careless with animals, I would recommend a reassignment of duties for the robot. Sounds like it would do an excellent job of fertilizing the garden.

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upi.com

By Daniel Uria | Sept. 16, 2016 at 3:00 PM



Russian robot Promobot was detained by police while conducting a survey at a political rally in Moscow. promobot had previously escaped from its lab and caused a traffic jam in June. Screen capture/Promobot/Facebook

MOSCOW, Sept. 16 (UPI) -- A robot with a history of going rogue was detained by police at a political rally in Russia.

Video shared to Facebook shows police confronting and attempting to handcuff the robot known as Promobot.

FB Newswire reported Promobot was conducting a survey of voters' opinions at a rally for Russian parliament candidate Valery Kalachev.

Promobot caused trouble in June after it escaped from its laboratory in the city of Perm and wandered into the street causing a traffic jam.

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Prosthetic leg found in beaver dam, returned to owner

August 8, 2016 yahoo.com

WABENO, Wis. (AP) — A Wisconsin man has his prosthetic leg back after the lost limb was discovered sticking out of a beaver dam by two canoers.

Elliot Fuller and Jason Franklin spotted the leg while paddling between a pair of lakes near Wabeno in Forest County on Thursday, the Wisconsin Journal Sentinel (http://bit.ly/2bdNgRF) reported. Fuller said they were convinced it was part of a corpse until they got close enough to pull it out.

"I was sure we had found a dead body that someone dumped into the creek," the Germantown man said. "We thought it was real at first until we got a closer look."

A quick search on Craigslist yielded an ad from Mark Warner, who lost the prosthetic limb when his own canoe tipped over during a July fishing trip on Range Line Lake in Wabeno. The 49-year-old from Green Bay said he rescued his fishing gear and cooler, but the prosthetic limb got away.

"I wasn't overly worried about it because I use my older model for fishing and hunting," Warner said. "It wasn't my everyday leg, to put it that way."

Fuller and Franklin found the limb three miles from where Warner lost it. They returned it to Warner on Friday, netting a \$50 reward for its safe return.

"Just did what I thought was right," Franklin said. "I hope that if I lost my leg that someone would return it to me, too."

Warner said he was sure it was gone. A friend had to convince him to put up the Craigslist ad.

"I really didn't expect to see it again. On my end, it's pretty amazing and it's pretty bizarre where it ended up," Warner said.

Information from: Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, http://www.jsonline.com

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Charles Lindbergh Was Not The First Flier To Cross The Atlantic

stuffnobodycaresabout.com

7 Strange and Unusual Historical Facts You Probably Didn't Know

When I was a kid I remember reading a copy of Ripley's *Believe It or Not* and coming across the "fact" that Charles Lindbergh was "merely the 67th person" to fly across the Atlantic.



Albert C Read's seaplane that crossed the Atlantic in 1919

Technically Ripley was correct. The first person to cross the Atlantic was Lieutenant Commander Albert C. Read. On May 16-27, 1919 Read flew in a seaplane, the NC-4, from Newfoundland to the Azores and on to Lisbon Portugal. it was *not* a non-stop flight like Lindbergh was to accomplish eight years later, but even so I never learned that in school.

Lindbergh was not even the first to make a non-stop flight across the Atlantic. Captain John Alcock and Arthur W. Brown flew non-stop in a British biplane from Newfoundland to Ireland in a little over 16 hours on June

14, 1919.

So with that nugget of history, here are six more unusual facts that you probably didn't know.

Why We Shake Hands With Our Right Hands

The custom of shaking hands has come down to us from the time when almost everyone carried a sword or knife. In those days when one met a stranger, it was customary as a matter of friendly intention, to hold out the right hand to show it did not hold a sword or knife.

It Was Predicted Skyscrapers Would Not Be Economically Practical Over Time

In 1939 It was estimated by the National Association of Real Estate Boards that "it is unlikely that the period of economic usefulness of a skyscraper can be much longer than forty years."

In The Early 20th Century There Was A Proposal To Go To A 13 Month Calendar

Moses B. Cotsworth's idea was to replace the 12 month Gregorian calendar, with a 13 month calendar. Cotsworth's calendar would apply uniformity to the number of days in each month – thirteen months each comprising 28 days.

28 times 13 is 364. Each month and each week would begin on a Sunday, with exactly four weeks to each month. A new month would be inserted in the summer between June and July.

An extra holiday New Year's Day which would not appear in the calendar would give us 365 days for a year. In Leap Year a second holiday would be inserted. One neat effect would be that we would have a Friday the Thirteenth every month. The proposal never acted gained ground with the public, except by George Eastman head of the Kodak Company who adopted it in his company and was used from 1928 – 1989.

The Word Window Came From "Wind Eye"

From the Old Norse "windawya" and Old English "windeage" meaning wind eye comes the word window. It was the eye of the house, a long narrow opening which was intended to let in a ray of

light, but which let in the wind as well. What would keep out the wind? In 1228 the King of England ordered a window of white glass for the queen's chamber at Winchester Castle, "so that the chamber may not be so windy as it used to be." Glass in casements was occasionally fixed into stone of castles that early in time. But glass windows in middle-class private dwellings were not at all usual before the 16th century.

The Saying "To Get The Sack" (Get Fired) Derived From The Sultan Of Turkey Disposing of His Harem

When the Sultan of Turkey got tired of members of his harem, he would dispose of them by ordering the offending woman to be put in a sack and thrown in the Bosporus strait. When people from Great Britain and the United States who had visited Turkey heard the story of the Sultan's disposal methods, they began to use the term "get the sack" to describe when someone was expected to be put out of a position suddenly.

The Custom of People Touching Glasses Before Drinking Originated To Avoid Poisoning
The people who fought duels in olden times used to pause before their fighting long enough to each
drink a glass of wine furnished by their friends. In order to make sure that no attempt was made to
influence the results of the duel by poisoning the wine in either cup, they developed the habit of
pouring part of the contents of each glass into the other, so that if either contestant was poisoned
the other would be too.

This habit has continued up to the present time, though now there is no thought given to the danger of poison. Also today the part of pouring the contents into each others cups has ceased. But the motion has remained as in the touching of glasses, expressing friendliness and good will.

Think about that the next time you clink glasses!

source: The New Wonder Book of Knowledge compiled by Harry Chase Hill (1940)

This entry was posted in History and tagged Etymology, Unusual on June 29, 2016 by B.P..

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Real-Life Lego Person Is A Hideous, Gentle Monster

Meet Creeppyfig.

07/28/2016 10:11 am ET Steven Hoffer Senior Editor, The Huffington Post

If there's another universe where everyone looks like a Lego person, we don't want anything to do with it.

Case in point: This real-life Lego character, called "Creeppyfig," looks like a cross between ET, Frankenstein and a toy store.

Creator Frank Ippolito said that he spent a week building the cosplay character, which also includes the creepiest Lego claw-hands you've ever seen. The Lego head is a 14-pound silicon mask, meaning that Ippolito gets pretty sweaty.

Did we mention the claws are straight out of a horror movie?



That is one scary Lego hand. Araya Diaz via Getty Images

An in-costume Ippolito and a crew from Tested.com cruised ComicCon shaking hands with children and freaking people out. The outfit was especially popular at the designated Lego area.

And while Ippolito probably could have used one of those detachable lego hair-pieces, the peg-head was certainly a nice touch.

This kid handles meeting a

monster surprisingly well.

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Reconstructing brain surgery as it was conducted around 3,000 years ago siberiantimes.com

By Anna Liesowska 16 August 2016

A study suggests cannabis, magic mushrooms and ecstatic dancing was used as ancient anaesthetic.



The 'patient' died at the age of between 30 and 40, and archeologists are confident the markings on the ancient bone were from surgical intervention and not ritualistic practices. Picture: Sergey Slepchenko

A step by step academic investigation into how Bronze Age medics conducted trepanation operations in Siberia has been conducted based on a male skull found last year in the Nefteprovod II burial ground at Anzhevsky archaeological site, southeast of Kansk in Krasnoyarsk region.

The 'patient' died at the age of between 30 and 40, and archeologists are confident the markings

on the ancient bone were from surgical intervention and not ritualistic practices.

They also believe that this man, whose remains were buried with a cranked or crooked knife, lived for a period of time after his surgery. His left parietal bone had an opening with evident signs of bone healing, as well as indications of an inflammatory reaction on the bone plates.

The suspicion is that his eventual death was caused by long term post operative inflammation. This man was not by any means the earliest known case of trepanation in Siberia: there are, for example, some dating to the Neolithic period.

Former surgeon Dr Sergey Slepchenko, now a researcher at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Novosibirsk, explained that 'the key to successful surgery was the patient's complete trust and confidence that the surgeon had the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out such an operation'.



Scull in situ

A male skull was found last year in the Nefteprovod II burial ground at Anzhevsky archaeological site, southeast of Kansk in Krasnoyarsk region. Pictures: Anton Vibornov, The Siberian Times

A critical element was plainly enabling the patient - in this case a male from an unknown ancient culture similar to the Karasuk people, but not one of them - to enter an 'altered state of mind' in which the pain was minimised.

Plants supposed as being used as painkillers in other locations are absent from Siberia, and instead Slepchenko and his colleagues identified flora which were used by indigenous peoples here to used to bring a person to an altered state of mind.

There are an intriguing number of such potential painkillers: for example, some ethnic groups used juniper and thyme in Shamanic practices; the Nivkhi people burned wild rosemary sticks and leaves; northern indigenous peoples used fly agaric mushrooms (Amanita muscarica), a powerful hallucinogen.



Scull in situ

The 'most obvious', however, was probably cannabis.

But the consumption of fungi, together with other Shamanic practices, such as ecstatic dancing or the use of a drum, is seen as a likely method of altering the conscious state of a patient and so reducing pain to the extent necessary to carry out surgery.

The left parietal bone had an opening with evident signs of bone healing, as well as indications of an inflammatory reaction on the bone plates. Pictures: Sergey Slepchenko

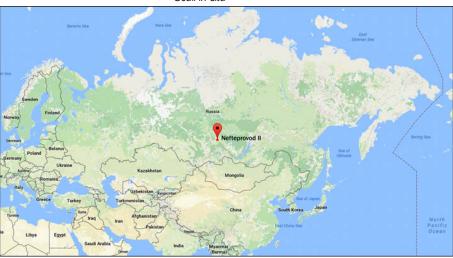
'For the preparatory phase of the operation, we

can only use our best guess,' he said. 'However, based on the shape and type of inclination of the edges, we may infer that the patient lay in a supine position with the head turned to the right.

'The surgeon probably stood face-toface to the patient on the left side. Or the surgeon may have fixed the head with his left arm or between his knees and operated with his right hand.'

Deductions by the team indicate that 'while the surgeon made an incision, an assistant helped by stretching the skin

> at the edges of the wound, as well as passing instruments and other materials'. The experts believe that it is 'likely' that 'a wide cut to the bone through the skin and





Newly formed bone



Newly formed bone

underlying tissues was performed', said Dr Slepchenko.

'Such a dissection of the scalp was described in Hippocrates' work' - some 600 years after this Siberian trepanation. 'After the area was cut, the wound would have been opened to organize a 'surgical field'.

A traditional Karasuk-style knife that was found in the grave, but there was no suggestion this was an implement used for the surgery. Picture: Anton Vibornov

'The skin and aponeurosis were peeled off the underlying bone. The next phase was bone scraping. Changes in bone as a result of healing prevent us from guessing precisely what instrument was used for trepanning or how



Cranked knife

it was made.

'We cannot definitely state that this operation was carried out with a specialised instrument.

Nevertheless, some sort of medical instruments existed in Siberia and were widely used for postmortem manipulations. These same instruments may have been applied for

trepanation.'

Dr Slepchenko said: 'Judging by the shape of the hole, I would suggest it was some kind of scraper, rather than a knife. The scraping lasted until dura mater was exposed after which the trepanation area could be enlarged in width but never below.

'The high survival rates after trepanation in early times may be explained by the fact that operations were mostly extradural. Penetration of dura mater causes the development of intracranial hematomas because of bleeding between the meninges.



Shaman

Shamanic practices, such as ecstatic dancing or the use of a drum, is seen as a likely method of altering the conscious state of a patient and so reducing pain. Picture: Vera Salnitskaya

'Subsequent complications, such as wound abscess, meningitis, and brain abscess, lead to death.

'The fact that individuals, including (this patient), lived for some period of time after the trepanation suggests that the dura mater remained intact long enough for strong signs of healing to appear.'

About the operation, he said: 'The opening was covered with skin after trepanation. Some blood filled the area between dura mater and inner

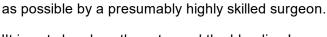
surface of the aponeurosis since blood clots prevented further bleeding from the diploe' - the spongy bone separating the inner and outer layers of the compact bone of the cranium.

But the wound 'could not be too tight' to minimise the risk of infection. 'It is not clear if sutures and/or bandages were applied; nor is it clear how the wound was drained. Yet some ethnographic records give evidence that these simple devices were implemented during trepanation.

'One of the most probable and most dangerous complications of trepanation is bleeding which develops immediately after the skin incision. As a consequence of further scraping, bleeding from blood vessels is accompanied by bleeding from the diploe bone.

Examples of Tagar bronze knife stored in Minusinsky local history museum, which are believed to have been used in ancient surgeries. Picture: Tatyana Chikisheva

'It is important that the dura mater remains intact since its damage may cause injuries to the sagittal venous sinus located under its plates. To minimize bleeding and reduce pain, the operation had to be carried out as fast



'It is not clear how they stopped the bleeding.'

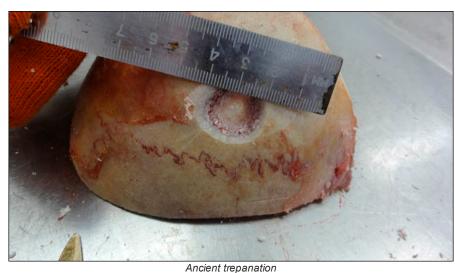
Obviously no written records are left but the experts surmise that 'herbs or red-hot objects' were used here.

The Karasuk culture refers to a group of Bronze Age societies from the Aral Sea to the upper Yenisei in the east and south to the Altai Mountains and the Tian Shan around the years 1500~800 BC. The Karasuk were farmers who practiced metallurgy on a large scale. They are considered to be the first people in Siberia who used horses for riding.

Yet the academics believe the brain surgery patient to have been from another grouping from an unknown culture with a similar lifestyle.

Ancient trepanation

The grave in which the trepanned skull was found - had been robbed in ancient times. Little more than the skull remained but there were additionally fragments of tubular bones of the upper limbs and of ribs.



Modern skull after the 'surgery' conducted by Alexei Krivoshapkin (top) copying ancient techniques (bottom). Pictures: Alexei Krivoshapkin

A traditional Karasuk-style knife that was found in the grave, but there was no suggestion this was an implement used for the surgery. Two stone arrowheads were also located.

The study on this reconstruction of trepanation is published in the International Journal of Osteoarchaeology.

The archaeological excavations and the study of the finds was possible thanks to the quick and professional work of the Security and Rescue Archaeology Department in the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Siberian Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences.

The archaeologists who took part were: Dr Anton Vibornov, Dr. Vyacheslav Slavinsky, Dr Alexander Tsybankov.

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- About Siberian Times

Ancient trepanation

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Batman costume earns Guinness record for functioning gadgets on a cosplay suit

upi.com



By Ben Hooper | Aug. 29, 2016 at 9:19 AM



Irish Batman Julian Checkley accepts his Guinness World Record certificate for most functional gadgets on a cosplay suit.

Screenshot: Guinness World Records/YouTube

GALWAY, Ireland, Aug. 29 (UPI) -A dedicated Irish Batman fan who
aimed to create the most
impressive costume earned a
Guinness World Record for most
functional gadgets on a cosplay

suit.

Julian Checkley, a lifelong cosplayer, said he wanted to go he extra mile with his suit inspired by Bruce Wayne's alter ego in the *Batman: Arkham Origins* video game, so he tricked out the batsuit with 23 functioning gadgets, including video screens on his gauntlets and a 2000-watt EMP Stun Gun.

The suit landed Checkley a spot in *Guinness World Records 2017: Gamer's Edition*.

"There were many long hours trying devising the gadgets and finding ways to store them on the suit. They are classic gadgets but also some are specific to Batman: Arkham Origins. I am immensely proud of my Guinness World Records title and to be part of the *Gamer's Edition* is just the next level," Checkley said.

The gadgets, as listed by Guinness, are:

- "1. Fireball shooter
- 2. Gauntlet video screens
- 3. Bat tracking beacon
- 4. Batsignal projector
- 5. Folding batarang
- 6. Grapnel gun
- 7. Cowl respirator
- 8. Pneumatic tranquilizer gun
- 9. Ultrasonic anti-dog device

- 10. Bat shurikens
- 11. UV lamp
- 12. Ball bearing grenades
- 13. Gauntlet flashlight
- 14. Medical kit
- 15. Battery pack
- 16. Laser designator
- 17. Bat-cam
- 18. Strobe stun gun
- 19. Gas dispenser
- 20. Smoke bombs
- 21. Bat flask
- 22. Concealed laryngeal microphone
- 23. Two-way radio"

"This incredible cosplay suit is a great example of the eclectic records that appear in this year's *Gamer's Edition 2017*. The detail and imagination behind the gadgets take the meaning of cosplay to a whole new level," said Stephen Daultrey, Editor of the *Guinness World Records 2017: Gamer's Edition*.

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ANIMALS Aug 29, 2016 08:34 AM ET

Hundreds of Reindeer Killed by **Lightning in Norway**



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in-noextelyundreds%20of%20Reindeer%20Killed%20by%20Lightning%20in%20Norway%20via 1990%2014420strake3Ex)rs%3DRebelMouse_fb)

Seventy young animals are among the dead.

Photo: Havard Kjøntvedt, Environment Directorate/Norwegian Nature Inspectorate.

More than 300 wild reindeer have been killed by lightning in southern Norway, officials said Monday, in the

More than 300 Reindeer Killed by Lightning in Norway

largest such incident known to date.

The 323 reindeer, including 70 young, were found on Friday by a gamekeeper on the Hardangervidda plateau, a national park where Europe's largest herd of some 10,000 wild reindeer roam freely.

Television footage showed the animals' dead bodies lying close together on the ground.

RELATED: Arctic Reindeer Poo Acts as Flame Retardant (http://www.seeker.com/arctic-reindeer-poo-acts-as-flame-retardant-1770630049.html)

"There were very strong storms in the area on Friday. The animals stay close together in bad weather and these ones were hit by lightning," an official from the Norwegian Environment Agency, Kjartan Knutsen, told AFP.

Reindeer are social creatures and usually move in packs.

"It's unusual. We've never seen anything like this on this scale," Knutsen said.

RELATED: Ice Age Drove Split Between Reindeer and Caribou (http://www.seeker.com/ice-age-drove-split-between-reindeer-and-caribou-1768156384.html)

Norwegian authorities have yet to decide what to do with the animals.

"We're going to decide soon whether to let nature run its own course or whether we will do something," he said.

Of the 323 reindeer killed, five had to be put down due to their injuries.

Thee are some 25,000 wild tundra reindeer in Norway, located in the southern mountain ranges, according to experts.

Wildlife (/Tag/wildlife)	Norway (/Tag/norway)	Deer (/Tag/deer)	Lightning Strikes (/Tag/lightning-strikes)
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4 of 4

Mexican Authorities Investigate Reports of Tiger Sighting

2016-08-11 go.com

• By mark stevenson, associated press

MEXICO CITY — Aug 11, 2016, 5:22 PM ET

Mexican authorities are investigating reports of a tiger sighting nine months after another Bengal tiger escaped into a mangrove forest in another part of the country and was never recaptured.

An official at the environmental protection department in the Attorney General's Office said Thursday that inspectors were sent Wednesday to the Gulf coast state of Campeche, where residents of the township of San Francisco Koben reported seeing a tiger. The species is not native to Mexico.

The official, who was not authorized to be quoted by name, said inspectors had not seen the beast despite patrolling the area by day and using cameras with sensors at night.

The area is covered by jungle and is near coastal wetlands.

A tiger escaped in November from a restaurant in the southern state of Guerrero and apparently killed five cows. Despite an extensive search, that tiger has never been found.

The distance and different ecosystems between Campeche and Guerrero make it unlikely but not impossible that the same animal is involved in this week's search.

Mexican circuses have been trying to get rid of exotic animals after a law went into effect in 2015 prohibiting such acts. But drug lords in Mexico have also been known to keep big cats as pets.

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Rites of Desecration: Suicide, Sacrilege and Profane Burial at the Crossroads - cvltnation.com



Mark Laskey 2014-09-08 Mark LaskeySeptember 8, 2014

Although suicide has always been considered to be the most personal of acts, it has a complex social and cultural history in the Western world one that has been shaped by three-thousand years of shifting moralities, public opinions, popular superstitions, religious beliefs,



medical interpretations and philosophical debates.

In ancient Greek and Roman societies, "self-death" was generally treated with a sense of ambivalence. Philosophers pondered the subject with an open mind, balancing notions of morality and free will, and ultimately believing it better to depart in peace rather than live a life of misery. Elite soldiers were expected to follow a hero's code, where death by one's own hand was embraced over surrender and battlefield disgrace. Medical practitioners routinely assisted in mercy killings, providing poisons to patients who wished to end prolonged sickness or suffering. Even members of the nobility, when faced with criminal charges and public shame, considered suicide to be dignified means for salvaging one's personal legacy from total disgrace.



crossroads4

This relatively tolerant attitude would change dramatically with the rise of Christianity. The early Christian sects themselves gave little value to life in this world. Following the example of their executed messiah, they celebrated the acts of martyrs who embraced death rather than renounce their faith. But as the religion became institutionalized by the fifth-century this outlook would change. Suicide was unequivocally declared a moral abomination, a sinful act of violence against God directed by the Devil himself, "which shall not be forgiven... neither in this world, neither in the world to come."1

Initially the punishment was spiritual in nature; those who committed self-inflicted death would be posthumously excommunicated, their corpse denied a proper Christian burial (an ecclesiastical sentence that doomed the soul

to an eternal state of purgatory, or worse). However, by the later medieval period, the suicidal act not only ran afoul of the church. Self-death, if proven to be committed with a sound mind, was declared "self-murder" under the common law, a felony crime subject to harsh punishments and grisly burial customs.2

Criminalized suicide, and the bizarre rituals associated with it, would become most pronounced in England during the Early Modern Era. Throughout this period it was customary for the corpse of a self-slayer to be

dragged through the streets in mockery and defilement, staked through the heart, and then buried at a crossroads by the light of the moon – a practice that continued up until the 1820s.

A CRIME AGAINST GOD. NATURE AND THE CROWN

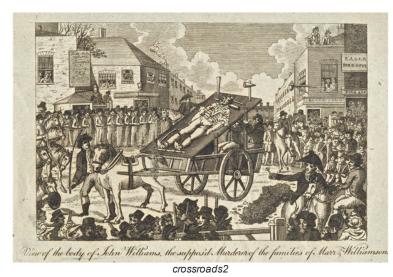
"We are God's possessions, and his servants, and should obey his commands like servants. Like prisoners, we should remain in our bonds. Like faithful followers, we should guard the treasure, and not reject the divine gift of life."

- John of Wales, Communiloquium (1270)

As with most important theological questions during the Middle Ages, Saint Augustine was considered the leading Christian authority on the subject of suicide and the eternal damnation of souls. The suicidal act was condemned as a "detestable crime and a damnable outrage" by Augustine, who argued that "having given life, God alone had the power to determine when people were to leave this world."3 By the sixth-century Church councils throughout Western Europe would adopt Augustine's absolute position, refusing funeral rites and masses for those who committed self-inflicted death on themselves.

In England, the first church legislation concerning suicide was written by the Archbishop of York in 740, which instructed priests to deny proper Christian burial customs to those "who laid violent hands upon themselves" if they were proven to be of sound mind at the time of death.4 Writing a century later, Halitgar, the Bishop of Cambrai, declared that "if a man slay himself of his own will with a weapon or with any means the devil offers, it is not allowed that the Mass be sung for such a man, or that psalms be chanted when the corpse is committed to the earth, or that it should lie in an unpolluted tomb."5 This position was reiterated in a canon attributed to King Edgar (the first ruler of a consolidated England) in the tenth century, who proclaimed it "neither lawful to celebrate mass for one who, by any diabolical instigation hath voluntarily committed murder on himself, nor to commit his body to the ground with hymns and psalmody or any rites of honorable sepulture."6

Although Christian teaching by this time considered suicide to be a sin, it was a position that remained vague until the thirteenth century. Even in the Bible, where a half dozen suicides are mentioned, there is no explicit opposition to self-inflicted death.7



Thomas Aquinas, the influential Dominican priest and philosopher, would be the first to advance a more comprehensive theological argument condemning the suicidal act. Setting the standard for religious condemnation, he argued that the sinful nature of suicide rested on three principles: divine ownership, harm against the social good and natural law.

"Whoever takes his own life," according to Aquinas, "sins against God, even as he who kills another's slave, sins against that slave's master, and as he who usurps to himself judgment of a matter not entrusted to him. For it belongs to God alone to pronounce sentence of death and life." In addition to undermining the divine order, the act was also

considered a crime against society, "since every man is part of a community, what happens to him must affect the community, with the consequence that to kill oneself is to do injury to that community." And lastly, the act of suicide violated natural law, as "everything naturally loves itself, the result being that everything naturally keeps itself in being, and resists corruptions so far as it can."8

Throughout the Middle Ages, suicide was considered an act of religious transgression and subject to canon law and communal folk customs. However, following Norman conquest it also came to be considered a criminal offense – referred to as *felonia de seipso*, or in its shortened version, *felo de se* (Latin for "felon of himself") – and under the jurisdiction of the Crown. Under feudal law, landless peasants were forced to swear allegiance to the king. Among other things, this oath bound them as the property of a lord who's lands they were expected to

work. As self-murder deprived the lord of a serf's labor it was considered a form of theft from which compensation was required.9

In the thirteenth-century legal treatise *De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliae* ("On the Laws and Customs of England"), Henry de Bracton outlined the concept of *felo de se*, which was punished by the forfeiture of wealth (including unclaimed debts), tools and goods, livestock and family-held lands – thereby reducing surviving family members to a state of abject poverty. Although rarely enforced up to this point, a handful of individuals were successfully prosecuted for the crime of self-murder during this period and punished accordingly.10

THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT

"The Devil rangeth abroad like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

- 1 Peter 5:8

The Devil was widely believed to be the guiding influence behind nearly every self-destructive act throughout the medieval and early modern periods. The Christian Church formally branded suicide as being 'diabolically-inspired' at the Council of Arles in 452.11 This belief would continue through the Middle Ages and reach its irrational apex following the Protestant Reformation – when "the Devil" ceased to be thought of in terms of metaphor or an afterlife concern, and began to be viewed as a real force in the world capable of manipulating the actions of humans and causing physical harm to those who fell under his influence.

Religious authorities initially treated suicide deaths with a sense of leniency, sympathetic to the plight of those who were unwittingly vexed by demonic forces and driven to desperate acts. Theodore of Tarsus, the seventh century Archbishop of Canterbury, exempted cases where the individual had acted out of fear or desperation, arguing that final judgment should "remain in the hands of God". However, by the later medieval period, there was a growing insistence on the sinful nature of the act ("the gravest temptation the Devil inflicted on Christian souls") and need for worldly punishment.12



Ajax-Suicide-Exekias960

Temptation has been a central concept associated with the Devil throughout Christian history. But it wasn't until after Reformation that the role of tempter became the single most important aspect of his agency.13 This belief was exemplified in the teachings of the Puritans, who considered Satan to be a "largely unseen but [...] constant and ubiquitous presence, the provoker of sinful thoughts, ever

manipulating the flesh and minds of every Englishman and woman, pushing them to commit sin and crime and thereby capture their souls."14 The Puritan minister John Sym wrote a lengthy tract on the subject of suicide in the 1630s (*Lifes Preservative Against Self-Killing*) in which he argued that the impulse towards taking one's own life was the work of the Devil, "who himself is a murderer, and moves man to practice it."15

The fact that suicide was considered a diabolical act is what set it apart from most other crimes (with the exception of witchcraft) from this period. The majority of unlawful acts could be blamed on worldly impulses such as greed, dishonesty or violence. Self-murder, on the other hand, was considered to be a crime with supernatural distinction, driven by *Diabolo impellente* ("the impulse of the Devil") to undermine Christian values and moral order.16

Depression was believed to be the primary means used by the Devil to instigate suicidal thoughts among the spiritually weak. In fact, a diagnosis of melancholy would often be described during this period as *balneum*

diaboli ("the devil's bath"), a state from which Satan "compelled such crazed souls to think such damned thoughts against their wills, [...] opposite to nature, opposite to God and his word."17 From 1597 to 1634, an English physician named Richard Napier kept records of over a hundred people in his care who claimed to be tempted by the Devil to self-inflict harm or death on themselves.18

In a surviving transcript of a 1663 sermon concerning suicide and diabolical influence, the case of James Salowayes is highlighted. Imprisoned after failing to pay a gambling debt, Salowayes fell to despair and attempted to cut his own throat. He claimed that the disembodied voice of the Devil had spoken to him, declaring, "Thou shalt be burned in this prison, therefore it is better for thee to make away thy self than be burnt".19 In a similar case, a London man named Anthony Joyce was unsuccessful in an attempt to take his own life in 1677. Questioned by authorities, he confessed that he had been "led by the Devil" into the act after he "forgot to serve God as he ought."20



FP-1973-Miss-Jones

Similarly, Nehemiah Wallington, a young seventeenth-century Puritan, claimed in his diary to have made eleven attempts at ending his life under diabolic influence. The Devil "showed himself" in various manifestations, including a crow, his sister, a minister and a disembodied voice. "Satan tempted me," recalls Wallington, "and I yielded to him and pulled out my knife and put it neere my throat. Then God of his goodness caused me to consider what would follow If I should do so. With that I felle out a weeping and I flong away the knife."21 In 1684, a Baptist teacher named John Childs hung himself underneath the cellar stairs of his house. In a suicide note left behind he

claimed to have been forsaken by God and influenced by "The Ministry of Darkness" to murder himself.22

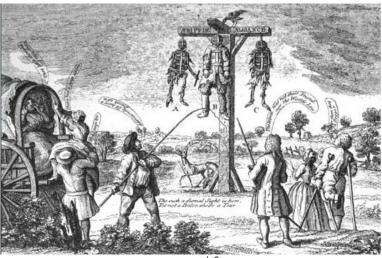
As the Devil's servants in the community, witches would also be accused of introducing suicidal thoughts into vulnerable minds. Agnes Buttress, a young woman treated by the above-mentioned Richard Napier in 1618, blamed her attempted suicide of a witch's "bad tongue". In 1620, Christopher Monke, of Leicestershire, told authorities that a local minister had bewitched his wife and son, causing the boy to cut his own throat. A Somerset man named Richard Bovet reported a local teenager who had been influenced by a suspected witch into repeated suicide attempts in 1684.23 And in 1712, Jane Wenham, the last woman to be convicted of witchcraft in England, was accused of influencing two young girls to try and drown themselves.24

Throughout the Early Modern era, the public's fear of suicide and diabolic intervention could also be found in written culture, "in tracts, sermons, devotional and conduct literature, plays and ballads, as well as in diaries and common-place books."25 One seventeenth century almanac would annually report on the suicides of otherwise unknown individuals. The purpose, according the publisher, was to warn readers "against the evil suggestions of the Prince of Darkness, that implacable Enemy of Mankind."26

WHERE THE FOUR PATHS MEET

- "...when the ghost of body issues forth from the grave and finds that there are four paths stretching in as many directions he will be puzzled to know which way to take and will stand debating until dawn compels him to return to the earth, but woe betide the unhappy being who happens to pass by when he is lingering there perplexed and confused."
- Montague Summer, English clergyman (1928)

The crime of self-inflicted death would be tried posthumously by a coroner's jury. If found guilty of "self-murder" one would be punished according to both common and canon law. The Crown would confiscate the self-murderer's worldly possessions as restitution; religious authorities would deny the requisites for a heavenly



crossroads3

afterlife (prayers, funerary services and a Christian burial). But punishment didn't end there. It was also customary – particularly during the Tudor and Stuart periods – for the corpse of a felo de se suicide to undergo a form of ritual desecration: defilement of one's body and living memory, followed by "profane burial" at a crossroads.

The significance of a crossroads burial has a unique history of its own, one that traces back to pagan times. Crossroads have long been considered an uneasy place, transitional gaps between bounded areas that were unclaimed and vulnerable to supernatural forces. The people of antiquity would leave "polluted materials" expelled from society - be it household garbage or

executed criminals - at these converging pathways. In ancient Greece, the customary treatment of those convicted of parricide (murder of a blood relative) was execution, followed by ritual desecration at a crossroads. The body would be "carried, naked, to an appointed crossroads lying outside the city" and "each official [would] throw a stone at the corpse's head" as an act of purification. The body was then left unburied.27

Among the Germanic people, criminals would be ritually executed and left hanging from gallows located at highway crossings as a blood offering to the gods. The early Christians continued to associate crossroads with these heathen practices, and considered them to be spoiled and haunted grounds. Like the ancient Greeks, Romans and Germanics before them, highway crossings were customarily designated as areas where the corpses of criminals who were guilty of particularly heinous acts should be discarded.28 They were also believed to be the meeting place of witches, who used these liminal points as a portal to commune with malevolent forces from the supernatural realm.

Since crossroads were considered dissociated places, they provided symbolically suitable grave sites for the outcasted – and potentially restless – dead. As an act of suicide cut a life prematurely short it was thought of as having broken from the divine order, and as a result, the soul was condemned to a state of eternal purgatory. The ghosts of suicide deaths were believed to be particularly hostile and susceptible to demonic control. According to some folklorists and historians, the significance of burying the body at a crossroads was to confuse the restless spirit left behind so they could not easily return to the community from which they took up residence in life.29

In Germany, there is a medieval reference to suicide and crossroads burial in the 13th century Landrecht laws of Silesia, which states that "when someone kills himself in a house or field he shall be buried at a road junction." This custom was further defined by the Rügen laws of 1530, which suggested that the body be dragged to the nearest crossroads, "where two or three field boundaries are marked, and there bury it in the ground and soil of the lordship in which he killed himself, putting his head where Christian dead have their feet."30

Archeological evidence from England points to various outcast burial customs, including crossroads burials, going back to Anglo-Saxon times. The first documented instance of this practice being used specifically for a suicide death dates to 1510, when Robert Browner, the superior of Butley Priory in Suffolk, hung himself after mismanaging church finances and his corpse was ordered staked and buried at a highway crossing.31 In the decades that followed, Protestant reformers attempted to rid the church of archaic rituals that embodied medieval Catholic or pagan elements. But when it came to burial practices – particularly in the case of suicides and other postmortem outcasts – the folk customs of the past continued to be followed.

Incorporating both inverted Christian and pagan rituals, the Rites of Desecration was a burial custom used to symbolically cast out suicides from the Christian community (both living and dead) in England during this period.32

The corpse of a suicide death was considered "polluted" and unworthy of proper Christian funerary and burial customs. Instead, it was to be interred at night, placed naked and face down in unhallowed ground (most often



crossroad1

at a crossroads, or some other unclaimed stretch along a highway). It was important that the body be buried facing north to south, as opposed to the Christian custom of west to east. It would then be staked to the ground, generally through the heart, as a means to anchor the spirit to the grave (or else prevent the body from rising to face God at the final day of judgment). In some instances, this would be accompanied by postmortem decapitation, with the head placed between the legs. The ritual was completed by piling stones on top of the desecrated corpse.33

Beyond religious purpose, this strange

custom also served as a deterrent for others contemplating self-murder. John Weever, a seventeenth century English antiquarian, explained that the purpose of burying corpses of suicidals at public crossings "with a stake thrust through their bodies, [was] to terrifie all passengers, by that so infamous and reproachfull a buriall, [so as to] not to make such their finall passage out of this world."34

The remains of other "unclean" deaths – suspected witches, murderers, thieves, gypsies and traitors – could be treated in the same manner. A version of this grim practice is described in a 1657 coroner's report for Miles Sindercombe, a rebel leader who was publicly executed for his part in a conspiracy to assassinate Oliver Cromwell. Inverting the Christian practice of respectfully carrying the body aloft, Sindercombe's naked corpse was dragged from the gallows 'head forward' behind a horse to his roadside grave. A long stake was then driven through the body and into the earth, with the "part of the Stake [that] remained above ground plated with Iron, which may stand as an example of terror to all Traytors for time to come."35

SELF-MURDER IN THE EARLY MODERN ERA

"O death destroye my memorie which is my Tormentor; my thoughts and my life cannot dwell in one body."

- Sir Walter Raleigh, in a letter sent to his wife prior to attempted suicide



Execution_of_Sir_Walter_Raleigh

The English Reformation touched off a series of social, political and religious changes throughout the country. Having broken with papal authority in 1534, the Church of England came under monarchist rule. This was followed by a series of new legal structures that extended the administrative control of the church and state into the countryside far more pervasively than ever before. Simultaneously, the animosity between Protestants and Catholics, and inter-Protestant factionalism between Anglicans and Puritans, led to a period of doctrinal insecurity and persecution. It wouldn't be long before sacred truths came under assault, old superstitions were given new life, and spiritual enemies were found at every turn.

It was during this era that public condemnation of suicide became even more pronounced, and the role of the Devil more conspicuous. Underscoring the Church of England's stance for the next century, George Abbot, the seventeenth century Archbishop of Canterbury, declared the taking of one's own life to be "a sin so grieuous that scant any is more hainous unto the Lord."36 Penalties also increased in severity, and were rigorously enforced. Between 1485 and 1660 over

95% of those who killed themselves were convicted of *felo de se* (with only 2% excused as *non compos mentis* – "not of sound mind") and punished accordingly.37

The custom of ritual desecration also continued unabated. A typical example from this period can be found in the 1595 case of Elizabeth Wickham, a widowed woman parishioner from St. Botolph's Algate, "who hanged herself upon a garden pale by her apron strings". Upon discovering she had previously attempted to take her

own life, a verdict of felo de se was passed. She was buried "in the alley where she hanged herself, [...] having a stake through her in remembrance of her wickedness."38 Another example comes from a 1665 coroner's report, documenting the treatment of the suicide of a young Wiltshire man named Henry Apes. After hanging himself in a barn, Apes' body was ordered "buryed between the two parishes of Staunton and Alton Barnes, with two stakes thrust through him."39

In the wake of the English Civil Wars of 1642-51 and the Revolution of 1688, and with the growing influence of Enlightenment philosophies, the country underwent further social and systematic changes. Royalist authority was challenged, the Church of England's theocratic monopoly was broken, radical and ultra-traditionalist religious sects were increasingly marginalized, and, among other legal reforms, the laws concerning self-murder were being tempered. The 'age of reason' had given rise to religious moderation, humanitarian perspectives and scientific rationalism – all of which contributed to a marked shift in public opinion around the subject of suicide.

During the reign of Charles III, this trend towards secularization was reflected in the rulings of coroner's juries and selective enforcement of suicide laws. In fact, by the last three decades of the eighteenth century, *felo de se* verdicts became as rare as *non compos mentis* ones had been during the Tudor period. Over 97% of the recorded suicides of this period were declared mentally unstable, with the rare instances of a *felo de se* verdict reserved for violent criminals or other persons of ill-repute as a means of posthumous punishment and disgrace.40



initial_d_demons_detail

There were, however, still evangelical sects (Methodists, Nonconformists) who clung to the archaic beliefs of the past that considered the Devil to be a co-conspirator involved with every act of self-murder – a belief shared by many common folk, regardless of denomination. And for those who were convicted of self-murder, punishment remained as severe (and the burial practices as grisly) as ever.

In 1722, a London bank robber who ended his life by a pistol shot to the head was convicted posthumously, "wrapp'd in an old Blanket, and buried upon Blackheath, with a Stake drove through him". A Shropshire shoemaker who hung himself and was declared fel de se in 1731. His family buried the corpse clandestinely in his back garden, hoping to avoid public shame. However public officials dug him up and relocated the corpse to a public highway, re-interring him following the traditional custom.41

A woman accused of poisoning sixteen people at a workhouse in Epworth and then ingesting arsenic to end her life was found guilty of self-murder by a coroner's jury in 1790. Her body was buried along a highway with two stakes driven through the corpse. And a few years later, in 1793, a thief named Jones had robbed a bank's clerk and hung himself in his jail cell to avoid trial. His body was paraded through the streets on an open cart with a white cloth covering his face, and deposited in a pit with a stake driven through it.42

One of the most infamously documented profane burials took place in December 1811, when John Williams committed suicide after he was accused of being "The London Monster" (a notorious highwayman and serial killer). Williams' corpse was drawn through the street on a cart with his murder weapons – a bloodied maul and chisel – by his side, followed by a massive procession of up to a thousand people. When they reached the junction of Cannon Street and Cable Street, "the body was crammed into the ground, and a stake driven through the heart with the same maul Williams used to kill his victims" (his staked remains were discovered by a gas company digging in the area in 1866).43

CONCLUSION

The Rites of Desecration continued to be performed for exceptional criminal suicides into the 1820s. The last known documented instance of this practice took place in June 1823 when Abel Griffiths, a 22-year old law student who took his own life after murdering his father, received a profane burial at the crossroads where London's Victoria Station now stands. Reflecting the shift in public opinion, the *Annual Register* criticized the



crossroads5

macabre spectacle, noting that "the disgusting part of the ceremony of throwing lime over the body and driving a stake through it was dispensed" prior to interment.44 The old burial custom – described at this time by moralists and parliamentarians as "an odious and disgusting ceremony" and "an act of malignant and brutal folly,"45 – would be suppressed by the 1823 'Burial of Suicide Act'.

However, suicidal deaths still carried a heavy stigma and continued to be punished and outcasted post-death (placed on the north side of churchyards, alongside unbaptized infants, excommunicates and executed criminals).46 The penalty of property forfeiture wouldn't be repealed until 1870, and religious penalties continued on for another decade.47 "Self-murder" itself would remain a criminal act on the statute books right up until the passage of 'The Suicide Act' of 1961.

Although suicide has since been secularized, decriminalized and largely demystified in the public mind, there still remains a folkloric belief centered around England's old crossroads – and the restless ghosts who are said to reside there. Emotionally tortured in life, defiled in death and disgraced in memory, the "self-murderers" of the past will continue to haunt the popular mind, reminding us of the archaic beliefs and macabre rituals of the not-so-distant past.

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FOOTNOTES

- 1. Suicide in the Middle Ages: The Curse of Self-Murder (Volume II); Alexander Murray; pg. 190
- 2. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 15
- 3. City of God, Book I (413CE), Augustine of Hippo; Chapters 16-27
- 4. Funeral Customs: Their Origin and Development (1926), Bertram S. Puckle; Chapter VIII
- 5. Suicide in the Middle Ages: The Curse of Self-Murder (Volume II); Alexander Murray; pg. 265
- 6. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 19
- 7. From Sin to Insanity: Suicide in Early Modern Europe, Jeffrey Watt; pg. 10
- 8. Summa Theologica, Thomas Aquinas; pg. 204
- 9. Suicide in the Middle Ages: The Curse of Self-Murder (Volume II); Alexander Murray; pg. 83-84
- 10. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 22.
- 11. The Greek Way of Death, Robert Garland; pg. 96
- 12. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 20
- 13. The Protestant Devil: The Experience of Temptation in Early Modern England, Nathan Johnstone; Journal of British Studies (2004); pg. 176
- 14. Talk of the Devil: Crime and Satanic Inspiration in Eighteenth-Century England, Owen Davies; pg. 4
- 15. Lifes Preservative Against Self-Killing, John Sym; pg. 246
- 16. Suicide in the Middle Ages: The Curse of Self-Murder (Volume II); Alexander Murray; pg. 191
- 17. Anatomy of Melancholy, Volume 3, Robert Burton; pg. 478
- 18. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 51
- 19. The true relation of the bloody attempt by James Salowayes to cut his own throat in the compter, upon Sunday the 21 of June, 1663, R.F.
- 20. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 52
- 21. Suicide and Attempted Suicide: Understanding the Cry of Pain, Mark Williams; pg. 6
- 22. Inventing the Devil and Experiencing Emotion in Seventeenth Century England, Jo Seto; pg. 9
- 23. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 53
- 24. Witchcraft and Demonianism, Cecil Ewen; pg. 112
- 25. The Protestant Devil: The Experience of Temptation in Early Modern England, Nathan Johnstone; Journal of British Studies (2004); pg. 175

- 26. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 304
- 27. Crossroads, S.I. Johnson; Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik, vol. 88, (1991); pg. 222
- 28. Funeral Customs: Their Origin and Development (1926), Bertram S. Puckle; Chapter VIII
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- 30. Suicide in the Middle Ages: The Curse of Self-Murder (Volume II); Alexander Murray; pg. 46-47
- 31. Criminal Graves and Rural Crossroads, Robert Halliday; British Archeology, no. 25, June 1997
- 32. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 18
- 33. Suicide in the Middle Ages: The Curse of Self-Murder (Volume II); Alexander Murray; pg. 46-47
- 34. Ancient Funerall Monuments (1631), John Weever; pg. 22
- 35. The Whole Business of Sindercome (1657); pg. 16
- 36. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 31
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- 38. From Sin to Insanity: Suicide in Early Modern Europe, Jeffrey Watt; pg. 26
- 39. Anglo-Saxon Deviant Burial Customs, Andrew Reynolds; pg. 217
- 40. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 133
- 41. Ibid; pg. 213
- 42. Ibid; pg. 137-38
- 43. Necropolis: London and It's Dead, Catharine Arnold; pg. 187
- 44. Victorian Suicide: Mad Crimes and Sad Histories, Barbara Gates; pg. 6
- 45. Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England, Michael MacDonald & Terence Murphy; pg. 348-49
- 46. Suicide and Attempted Suicide: Understanding the Cry of Pain, Mark Williams; pg. 15
- 47. Necropolis: London and It's Dead, Catharine Arnold; pg. 187

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Leave a Reply

2 Comments on "Rites of Desecration: Suicide, Sacrilege and Profane Burial at the Crossroads"

Cesar Ozaeta
1 year 10 months ago

muy bueno.

Magda Wintar 1 year 10 months ago

Stupid fucking christians can't accept somebody's decision.

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Rubber ducky back home after mysterious global adventure

Aug. 11, 2016 seacoastonline.com



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| Jennifer Troiano talks about receiving her daughter Alicia's rubber duck with a suitcase full of postcards and souvenirs from around the world after it was missing for five years. The duck's travels have been documented on the Facebook page "Gale Ducky" and the identity of the party responsible is still a mystery, the family says. Photo by loanna Raptis/Seacoastonline

 HAMPTON — It was five years ago that the Troiano family's large rubber duck went missing from their Gale Road home. What followed were mysterious postcards, Facebook posts and pictures of the duck from all over the world, giving the appearance of being penned by the bath toy under a new name — Gale Ducky.

After visiting about 20 different countries, including Switzerland last February, Gale finally returned home. The duck was discovered on the pavement in front of the Troianos' garage with a suitcase full of keepsakes from around the world – a Goofy hat from Disney World, a key card from hotels like in Salzburg, Austria, maps from places like Thailand and Cape Town, South Africa, and numerous other international pieces of memorabilia.

Jennifer Troiano, who discovered the duck had returned, was shocked. She and her daughter, Alicia, to whom the duck belonged, had followed Gale on the ducky's Facebook page ever since the travels began.

"I just was like, 'What is she doing home?'" Jennifer Troiano said. "Where has she been? Who had her?"

Gale, slightly larger than a football, came to the Troianos about 10 years ago when Alicia Troiano was given the duck from a neighbor for whom she babysat. Alicia Troiano enjoyed putting Gale — then known as "Baldie" — into the makeshift pond that filled up on rainy days in front of the house as a sort of lawn decoration.

One day Baldie went missing, but the Troianos thought little of it. Then, months later, a postcard came supposedly written by the ducky, postmarked from Kuwait City, telling the family of her travels to Honduras, Amsterdam and the Middle East. The duck had also been given a new name, the postcard signed "Gale Ducky." The

note encouraged the Troiano family to follow her travels on the Facebook page "Gale Ducky."

Pictures on the Facebook page showed the duck hanging out with locals and sitting in front of picturesque views from around the world. Trips also included those to the Caribbean, Mexico, South Korea, Hawaii, Zimbabwe, Iceland and Panama. In Europe, Gale fished with an Englishman and posed for a picture with the Matterhorn in the background.

Gale also visited many locations in the United States, such as Orlando, San Diego, Las Vegas and Niagara Falls.

As time went by, Gale's travels captivated not only the Troianos but fans around the country. The page has over 600 followers. Local news outlets sought to do stories on Gale. One Boston TV station did a story the winter after the duck went missing.

The Troianos had planned to keep following Gale in perpetuity when she finally made her return this month.

Jennifer Troiano had woken up at 5:30 a.m. that Wednesday morning to check her email and prepare for an early morning bike ride when she saw an update in her Facebook feed from Gale Ducky.

As she looked closely at the update, she realized something was strangely familiar about where the picture was taken of Gale sitting on a curbside with a suitcase. The photo's caption read, "waiting for my ride."

"I looked at the picture and I said, 'That's my sidewalk,'" Jennifer Troiano said. She walked outside to find her "wayward duck" sitting with his suitcase in front of her garage.

Most of the items inside the suitcase are maps from various places, but there are some more unique pieces as well. Jennifer Troiano said the green friendship bracelet Gale brought her is special in a way, as her daughter makes friendship bracelets. She also particularly likes Gale's giant sunglasses.

The Troianos are seasoned travelers themselves, having vacationed internationally and intending to go to China at some point soon. Troiano said they would never be able to keep up with Gale, though. She said she was a little jealous to see Gale basking in the sun at the Maldives in the Indian Ocean.

Alicia Troiano said she is disappointed that Gale's adventures are now over. She might consider taking Gale with her on her own travels, but she said it would not be same.

"I will miss seeing the funny pictures that pop up on Facebook and waiting to find out his next destination," Alicia Troiano said.

If the adventure had to end, she said her showing up with her suitcase full of memorabilia was "such a fun way to return home." The Troianos said they have never learned who "ab-duck-ted" Gale and taken her on her journeys. While some might be unnerved by a stranger taking their property and sending them pictures from all over the world with it, the Troianos have never had a problem with Gale's travel buddy.

"We're happy the duck got to go and explore and travel," Jennifer Troiano said, then joking, "That's the first thing I would think of when I saw it. I would steal it and have fun with it."

Jennifer Troiano's best guess, she said, is that the culprit is a pilot. She scoured the Facebook page for clues, finding only one potential indicator — a picture of the duck in a cockpit with a pilot and co-pilot. Still, she wonders if pilots would fly routes to such a variety of locations.

Alicia Troiano wishes she knew the answer.

"I have so many questions," Alicia Troiano said. "I want to know why they were inspired to pick him up out of his pond and bring around the world, especially since he is not a very small or portable duck."

At this point, Jennifer Troiano said she hopes the abductor's identity remains a mystery.

"It just keeps it fun," Troiano said.

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seacoastonline.com | 111 New Hampshire Ave., Portsmouth, NH 03801

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By Dana Matthews on 07/07/2016

weekinweird.com



Ruby The Haunted Doll: Meet the Sad Artifact That Proves Not All Haunted Objects Are Evil

Week In Weird



RubyFeaturedImage

When most people think about the paranormal, there's a very good chance that the first place their minds go is a dark and scary one. It's an honest and uncontrollable initial reaction, but one that can, and should be overcome. Ruby the Haunted Doll is a great reminder of why the paranormal doesn't have to be a dark and frightening subject.

Ruby has been a part of the **Traveling Museum of the Paranormal and the Occult** since the very beginning. Long before we'd ever decided to take our

supernaturally-influenced objects on the road to haunted locations across the country, Ruby was a much-loved piece of our personal collection of strange artifacts.



Ruby2

Ruby was given to me by my good friend Meghan, who, at the time of our conversation, had the doll hidden away in an old attic, stuffed into a cardboard box with some board games and books. As the saying goes, out of sight, out of mind. Meghan told me that the doll had been a strange point of contention among her family members for decades. This doll, she said, was haunted, but because of its complicated and uncomfortable history, dealing with the haunting wasn't as simple as calling a priest or burying the object.

Ruby had been a family heirloom for a handful of generations, though as the years wore on, Meghan's family had become less and less welcoming of having Ruby as a houseguest. One look at her and it's easy to understand why they might not want her on display in their homes, but her appearance wasn't the only reason that Ruby had spent the last several decades stored away in boxes, storage units, and musty basements.

According to the family, the well-worn heirloom came with all the usual features of a creepy haunted doll. It moved around the room seemingly of its own accord, produced strange sounds, and generally terrified and disgusted anyone with the slightest belief in the supernatural. Ruby, though, had another unique ability: she seemed to make anyone in her immediate vicinity feel ill. Meghan said that the antique doll had a knack for causing headaches, allergies, exhaustion, and most

commonly, overwhelming nausea.

As it turns out, Ruby belonged to a very distant member of Meghan's family, a very ill little girl who died when she was quite young. In fact, the family maintains that the girl died while holding Ruby in her arms. The uncomfortable and often unspoken feeling that Ruby gave the family was that their long-dead relative is likely still attached to her favorite doll.

What do you do when you believe that a family member, one with whom you have no tangible connections to other than blood, refuses to move on? It's a complicated situation, for sure. No one wants to believe that they're discarding the spirit of a relative, and yet, few want to deal with a haunting. Meghan admitted that her family, who were all church-going, born-again Christians, had at one point even gone against their beliefs about "dabbling in the occult" and hired a psychic medium to help the girl pass on. It didn't work, and so they fell back on passing Ruby around from house to house, a trail of bumps in the night and chronic illness following her.

Knowing that I'd spent the better part of my life investigating paranormal activity, Meghan asked me if I would be interesting in giving Ruby a home where she, and her family, knew she would be safe, respected, and potentially even helped. Of course, I said yes. Ruby the Haunted Doll officially became a member of our strange family that day.



Ruby3

At first, Ruby didn't do anything out of the ordinary, and we credited her tales of apportation and sickness to a group of people having worked themselves up over an old family legend, a sad situation, and a creepy doll. It's understandable, and it happens more than you might think.

Eventually, Greg and I founded the **Traveling Museum of the Paranormal and the Occult**, bringing a rotating collection of our most interesting haunted items to events in some of the world's most haunted locations, and Ruby's story was one we felt

needed to be told. It seems like all Ruby needed was a crowd to get her to come out of her shell, because that's when the really strange events started to occur.

Most who come into contact with Ruby walk away having felt no headaches, no nausea, no onset of a chronic illness. Many, though, have a different, more unusual response, one that was hard to ignore. What we began to notice was that close to half of all the people who took the time to actually hold Ruby reported being overwhelmed by familiar, maternal feelings. In fact, most people who held her began to rock her back and forth, treating Ruby as you would a living child, with a number of them actually breaking down into tears due to an overwhelming, sudden affection for her.

Stranger still, is the fact that museum visitors will be performing these motherly actions without even realizing what they're doing. I've had full conversations with people who have been bouncing Ruby, rocking her, even burping her the entire time. It's not until I point it out their actions that they even remember they're holding Ruby. As you can imagine, the shock tends to hit them fairly hard, especially if their initial reaction to Ruby was to recoil in horror from the "creepy doll". It's as if she's sending a message: "I'm not scary."



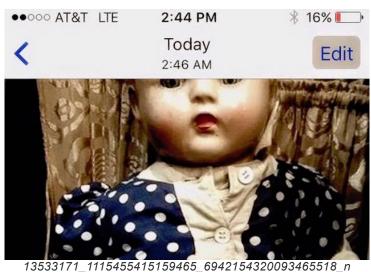
Ruby1

For the most part, despite her stained clothing and cracked face, Ruby has never done anything particularly frightening, and that's the lesson I love to teach to visitors to the Traveling Museum of the Paranormal and the Occult. Not everything that looks creepy is out to terrorize you, possess you, or drag your soul to the depths of hell itself. In fact, it's very rare that any entities, human or otherwise, are trying to get you to do anything but understand them. All you need to do is overcome your ingrained fears and listen closely for the message these items are trying to send. Deciphering that message is another

story entirely.

A few weeks ago, Ruby sent one of her strongest messages yet, and it's one we're still attempting to understand.

Ruby's interactions with the general public have always been contained to emotional events. That is, until the 20th Anniversary Haunted America Conference. After the event, **Lisa Taylor-Horton**, author and Haunted America Conference organizer, contacted us with a strange report that accompanied a mysterious photograph on her phone, one she swore she didn't take. That photo was of Ruby.



16% Via Lisa Taylor-Horton / Facebook

Haunted America Conference founder and prolific history and hauntings author Troy Taylor summarized the strange event **on his**Facebook page

Strange things happen at the Haunted America Conference, especially when the Planet Weird Traveling Museum of the Paranormal & Occult is involved. Even though she never touched, handled or photographed any of the objects from the museum, my partner in crime Lisa Taylor

Horton ended up with an unwanted souvenir from the museum.

On Saturday night / Sunday morning, long after the conference had ended and the museum had been packed away, a very strange event occurred. Following the Ghosts of the River Road dinner tour (Lisa forgot her phone in her room for this one), the late evening seance and cocktails with friends, Lisa plugged her phone in and went to sleep. It was a little after 2:00 AM.

The next morning, Lisa checked out and started for home but we stopped along the way for lunch. That's when she noticed that her phone was almost dead, even though it had been plugged in all night — and that's when she looked at the photos on her phone.

The latest photo was the weird one. It was a photo of "Ruby," a doll and one of the artifacts in the museum. A couple of problems, though... The time stamp on the photo was 2:46 AM, and stranger, Lisa didn't take it! She was asleep at the time and Ruby had been packed away hours earlier!

What happened?? We don't know. So far, there is no logical explanation for what occurred, or at least we haven't come up with it yet. All that I can say is that if you've ever wondered about the authenticity of the objects in the museum — I think you can stop.

Perhaps it's possible that Ruby has become aware of the kind of attention that some of the museum's objects like **The Crone**, **The Idol of Nightmares**, and **The Dark Mirror** have been getting, and, in her very sweet fashion, Ruby picked the least terrifying way to make contact with someone whom she felt a connection with. If the young, sickly girl who died all those years ago is still attached to her favorite doll, maybe there was something about Lisa that drew her attention and made her want to reach out and make contact.

For now, we'll continue to bring Ruby with us to events around the country, and we'll continue to let people have their own special experiences with her, because I believe she's a shining example of what real paranormal activity can look like. For many of us, we've become so accustomed to expecting haunted objects to be terrifying, aggressive, and "demonic", likely due to what we see on television and in movies, but there's nothing scary or creepy about Ruby.

If we're to believe what Meghan's family believes, there's a sweet little girl still holding on to Ruby's cracked hands, and maybe today, that little girl is finding comfort in the people who interact with her. In her own way, she's just reminding us that she's still here, wanting to be loved and respected, just like anyone else.

Dana Matthews

19 Comments

1. Denny Blair

07/08/2016 at 1:21 AM

The demonic sure do love to deceive.

Planet Weird

07/08/2016 at 1:22 AM

Those who thump the Bible hardest do a good enough job of deceiving themselves.

Denny Blair

07/08/2016 at 1:24 AM

I was just stating something that most people do not seem to grasp. No need for the harsh words.

Denny Blair

07/08/2016 at 1:25 AM

I have a true belief about what the Bible says yes. But it does not mean that I am deceived.

Planet Weird

07/08/2016 at 1:27 AM

Not being harsh, just honest. You can believe whatever you'd like, Denny, but the world is much bigger, more fascinating, and more mysterious place than a black and white view of angels vs. demons will allow.

Denny Blair

07/08/2016 at 1:27 AM

I could explain it to you if you would like.

Greg Newkirk

07/08/2016 at 1:29 AM

Spare us, dude. No offense, but I'm an ordained minister that was raised by half a dozen generations of Baptist preachers. I'm good and familiar with the reasoning. And I still don't buy it. The world is a grey area, and there are many paths to god.

Peter A.

07/07/2016 at 9:16 PM

You claim to be an ordained minister, and yet you spell the word "God" here the way atheists do, with a lower-case g. There is also the fact that your view that there are "many paths to God" is one that Christ himself never endorsed, there being only one way, and he states this quite clearly (ex. Gospel of John 14:6 – "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.")

Greg Newkirk

07/07/2016 at 9:40 PM

Yeah, and you completely missed the point of what I was saying because you went ahead and quoted the Bible like a dingus. Just because I'm ordained doesn't mean I'm practicing, and just because I spelled god with a lower-case "G" doesn't mean I'm an atheist. It's nitpicking like this that has caused Christianity to wither from the tree of spirituality. There are many other branches on that tree which are doing just fine, and they all lead to the same roots.

Denny Blair

07/08/2016 at 1:33 AM

OK. None taken. I just felt like sharing something that most in the world of Christianity don't understand. It's all good though.

Denny Blair

07/08/2016 at 1:34 AM

I meant no disrespect.

Reply

2. Tina Smith

07/08/2016 at 1:42 AM

Ya, any trapped energy is sad

3. Lisa Massey

07/07/2016 at 7:04 PM

I so wish I had a "Ruby" in my family to love. such a sad story, but seems like the child is expressing herself through her best buddy Ruby. I love this little doll already.

4. David Yates

07/08/2016 at 2:10 AM

Dana Newkirk, I agree with you completely that the paranormal isn't always evil and out to get you. The paranormal is something that should be embraced but at the same time, caution is always a good thing. Humans tend to fear and hate what they can't understand or control. I have much respect for you and Greg for trying to understand the paranormal rather than give into fear. I'm also glad that you see nothing in black and white but in shades of grey which is how I see things as well.

5. Gloria Mako

07/08/2016 at 3:17 AM

What's scary is my sister keeps a doll like this one, she's had her for 62 yrs. Lots of love

6. Tina Dawson

07/08/2016 at 7:15 PM

I like the story of Ruby. Its nice to know the paranormal don't have to be scary. what a special doll.

7. Richard W. Morgan

07/09/2016 at 12:52 PM

Fascinating story, Dana. I was wondering if you had considered coming to Galveston Island, Texas. There are no shortages of haunted places there. We once owned an old Victorian house there It was built in 1897, and haunted us for 12 yrs. Back in the 1990's if I had been aware of so many ghost hunters being out there, I would have contacted them right away. I believe it is haunted by children, because when we sat in the back yard, we could hear them laughing and bumping around. There were some mean spirits there as well. Our daughter, who was about 11 or 12 at the time, had a mirrored headboard on her bed, and would be terrified when seeing ugly faces in it. She would come running upstairs crying hysterically about what she had seen.

8. Richard W. Morgan

07/09/2016 at 12:54 PM

I would love to hear from you.

9. Danielle

07/09/2016 at 1:49 PM

Poor Ruby. Reading her story made me want to introduce her to my dog (a funny little pug). Wonder if she'd like pictures....

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■ All Activity Rugby Ball with Legs

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2

#1

Started by dragonlady mothman, April 26, 2005



44 posts in this topic

1 2 NEXT >> Page 1 of 2 ▼

dragonlady_moth man

Psychic Spy



Posted April 26, 2005

Quote

Telepathic Football-Like Creature Threatens Chilean Teens

VILLA SAN RAFAEL, Chile (Wireless Flash) -- Forget Bigfoot or the Mothman. The newest paranormal creature is a four-legged football.

Member

Q 3

1,737 posts Gender: Not Selected Believe it or not, a creature matching that exact description has been sighted threatening teenagers in Villa San Rafael, Chile.

Researchers at the Calama UFO Center in Chile claim the mysterious menace has wings, a face like a large bulldog and is "shaped like a rugby football with legs."

Paranormal researcher Dr. Virgilio Sanchez-Ocejo isn't sure if the creature is one of those goat-sucking chupacabras, but admits both animals telepathically communicate with humans.

The winged football is just one of hundreds of strange creatures that have been terrorizing Chile since 1999 and Dr. Sanchez-Ocejo suspects the mysterious beings are entering Chile through a dimensional doorway.

http://www.100megsfree4.com/farshores/ufochi2.htm

Quote

A Very Strange Creature Encountered

In Villa San Rafael, Chile

Two of the young teenagers, Jean F. and Nelson C, who are residents of one of the parcels of the central area of Villa San Rafael, described a chilling experience that they went through last Saturday, 12 of January of this year (2002) at approximately 11:45 PM.

It all began when Jean noticed that his pet snake escaped from its cage. His friend Nelson noticed it was gone, so they began looking for it outside among the rubble of the parcel. They recall how half an hour before, their two dogs strangely began to howl and cry; however, it did not seem to be important at that point in time.

They searched for the pet snake together when suddenly, at about 30 meters from where they stood, they saw what appeared to be a stray dog. They immediately picked up rocks to throw at it to avoid an attack. However, to their surprise, the animal stood there, motionless and fearless; it did not get scared nor it ran away as ordinary dogs normally do.

Shortly afterwards, the strange animal began to move towards them. The movements it made as it walked were very strange. It used two legs at a time. It made very small and short leaps like a rabbit. Suddenly, it stopped and it stood up on two legs.



The teenagers then began to feel some kind of energy. "It was like an electrical shock in the stomach," they said. It later walked again (upright) making a loud dragging noise, making small leaps and only moving one of its legs. They thought that it might have been hurt after they threw rocks at it. They noticed the weird shape of the animal. "It was like a rugby football with legs," one of them said.

Jean began to feel frightened and started to move away from the animal. On the other hand, Nelson felt a strange need to get closer to creature; he got as close as 2 meters away from it. The animal appeared to emit a strange luminosity that apparently, was bright enough to light a small area around the animal in spite of the nighttime darkness of the place.

Nelson was mesmerized as he stared at such strange-looking animal. He remembers a detailed description of it. According to him, its head was like the one of a large dog and it had a flat nose like a bulldog. Its eyes were slanted and pale-red in color, which could only be seen when the creature turned its head from side to side like small lizards do. At that moment, Nelson claims that he heard a voice in his head saying, "Don't stare, just run away."

They provided further descriptions of the alleged animal. Its ears were flat, round and large. Its arms were short, they had elbows and the hands had three fingers. It had hair like the one on a wild pig. Its legs were like the ones from a goat. The feet had also three fingers and a membrane like ducks, but somewhat shorter. He does not recall seeing nails because the grass was covering the tip of the fingers.



On its curved back, they were able to notice a spinal section covered with amounts of even thicker hair. According to the teenagers, the "thicker" hairs grew in small separated sections or groups down the spinal area and they pointed downwards. Most of the hair of the animal was gray, but the tail had a white tip. The tail appeared to be three times thicker than the one on a dog but it was very short; it was about 5 centimeters in length.

Nelson finally fled, terrified, from the area. He also described how he felt an inexplicable bone-chilling cold sensation. Finally, the teens returned home and did not want to go back to take a second look at the creature. These testimonies were taken separately from the teenagers, and yet, both accounts concurred entirely.

http://www.rense.com/general19/wg.htm

...once again: these things are getting weird and weirder.



Alien Abducter



"Apparently I have lost the fallatus to speak properly."

Posted April 26, 2005

tongue gif

#2

#3

where do you find these stories tongue.gif

this creature seems to be linked with UFO's, possibly an alien then yes.gif



dragonlady_moth man

Psychic Spy



 Posted April 26, 2005

That i found searching for recent Flatwoods Monster

sightings! tongue.gif

here and there. i spend alot of time googling for certain monsters, then find something that catches my eye. Like "Telepathic Football" (title i saw it under).

how can you ignore something like that?!

LarryOldtimer

Astral Projection





Member • 0 681 posts Location: Phoenix, AZ

In the beginning, there was nothing. God said, "Let there be light." There still was nothing, but you could see it better.

Posted April 26, 2005

#4

A strange creature in the grass, indeed. The question probably isn't what the creature they saw was, but rather what kind of grass, and what were they doing with it. grin2.gif

xoisk

Psychic Spy



Member

O 6

1,168 posts Gender:Male Location: Chagrin Falls, Ohio

«Si escribo algo, temo que suceda, si amo demasiado a alguien temo perderlo; sin embargo no puedo dejar de escribir ni de amar». — Isabel Allende

Posted April 26, 2005

#5

crazy...

Doctor_Strangelov

e



Posted April 27, 2005

rolleyes.gif Beware of killer footballs.





Mein Führer! I can walk!

Fable

Astral Projection





The bridge is crossed, so stand and watch it burn!

Posted April 27, 2005

#7

I think some people get a bit to obsessed with these monster catcher series that are plastered all over the world.

TheManWithNoNa me

Alien Embryo





Posted April 27, 2005

That is one crazy story. I don't know though, if I saw a bull dog head on a football body i'd probaly pee my pants laughing.

Rye Guy
Alien Embryo

Posted April 27, 2005

#9



Member 83 posts What do you do when it attacks? Go for a field goal?

Amalgamut

Government Agent *********



Member 0 3,480 posts Gender:Male Posted April 27, 2005

🗾 rofl.gif

Walken

Deus ex Machina ***



Member **Q** 2

10,839 posts Location: The Mothership

"I've done everything you wanted me to do; so why did you do this to me?!"

Posted April 27, 2005

laugh.gif That or just kick it around for a bit...

#10

#11

Amalgamut

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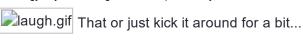
Posted April 27, 2005

Walken said:

Government Agent



Member • 0 3,480 posts Gender:Male



592687[/snapback]

LMAO! laugh.gif yeah that would be fun. bounce.gif



Apparition





Member **Q** 1 358 posts Gender: Male Location: Utica, Michigan, USA Posted April 27, 2005

#13

I can't think of anything witty to say right know, so I just do this..... blink.gif laugh.gif

CrazyHarry

Extraterrestrial Entity





Member • 0 394 posts

Crazy Harry plays with Electricity!

Posted April 27, 2005

#14

I wanna punt it.

mr_halo



Posted April 27, 2005

#15



CrazyHarry said:

I wanna punt it.

593748[/snapback]



"Apparently I have lost the fallatus to speak properly."

the arms and legs wouldn't make it very aerodynamic though no.gif



CrazyHarry

Extraterrestrial Entity





Crazy Harry plays with Electricity! Posted April 27, 2005

#16



CrazyHarry said:

I wanna punt it.

593748[/snapback]

the arms and legs wouldn't make it very aerodynamic though no.gif



593895[/snapback]

So? I will still punt it! w00t.gif

Undefined_innoce nce

Psychic Spy





Member

Posted April 27, 2005

#17

Sounds like bored teenagers to me.



1,373 posts Gender: Not Selected Location: Georgia

If today is the first day of the rest of my life, im in for a hell of a ride.

Falco Rex

The Winged Avenger **(3)(3)(3)(4)(4)(4)(4)**



Member **O** 10 4,974 posts Gender: Male Location:Indiana

I'll write something pithy here later, for now just use it to advertise your band.

Posted April 28, 2005

#18

One thing I've noticed is that the stranger and more outlandish a story is; the more likely it is to have come from South America.

..Something in the water? wacko.gif



Bio-Mage

Mutant Gene Nullifier ***



Member

Q 2

1,861 posts Location: Where no man has gone before...

Fear not...for I am watchful.

Posted April 28, 2005

#19

At least it wasn't capable of pyrokinesis....imagine that...

Posted May 2, 2005





Quote

In Chile, we found chupacabras the size of a football. The same shape as a football with two legs, two arms, but with different hair. These little chupacabras did not attack or suck any blood. They just go around with the big one.

Editor: You're assuming the small football-sized one is a child?

V-S-O: We call them babies. There hasn't been any report of the babies attacking a domestic animal. I interview(ed) an eyewitness who was close to three feet from one of these babies. We collect samples of his hair. Every day we check for reports of any paranormal phenomena that happened in the area. One of them was a spontaneous fire (at) the offices of the Wackenhut security agency in Iquique, a city in the north part of Chile, close to Peru.

http://www.thewhyfiles.net/chupacabra4.htm

im looking for information on chupa-telepathy and i ran across this.

mr_halo





Member 0

4,503 posts
Gender:Male
Location:Weston Super Mare

"Apparently I have lost the fallatus to speak properly."

Posted May 2, 2005

#21

dragonlady_mothman said:

Quote

In Chile, we found chupacabras the size of a football. The same shape as a football with two legs, two arms, but with different hair. These little chupacabras did not attack or suck any blood. They just go around with the big one.

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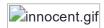
of his hair. Every day we check for reports of any paranormal phenomena that happened in the area. One of them was a spontaneous fire (at) the offices of the Wackenhut security agency in Iquique, a city in the north part of Chile, close to Peru.

http://www.thewhyfiles.net/chupacabra4.htm

im looking for information on chupa-telepathy and i ran across this.

601540[/snapback]

theres so much chupacabra info out there, no wonder everyone thinks any dead animal is a poential chupacabra, i mean theres so many descriptions of the creature and the powers it has and the way it acts and where it lives, its all so confusing rofl.gif







Posted May 2, 2005

#22

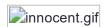


CrazyHarry said:

I wanna punt it.

593748[/snapback]

the arms and legs wouldn't make it very aerodynamic though no.gif



593895[/snapback]

Hmmm...

Well maybe it would get the idea, and put its hands up like a diver? tongue.gif

bob23

Apparition





Member • 0 255 posts Gender:Male

"A "flying disc" crashed on a nearby ranch and soldiers from the 509th Bomb Group had recovered the remains"

Posted May 2, 2005

#23



Undefined_innocence said:

Sounds like bored teenagers to me.

593917[/snapback]

Sounds like high teenagers to me tongue.gif



dragonlady_moth man

Psychic Spy





Member **Q** 3 1,737 posts Gender: Not Selected

Posted May 2, 2005

#24

I've noticed. First it's a gray alien, then it's a kangaroo, then it's that bizzarre dead thing in Texas...

anyone else notice how El Chupa is always said to be gray, but they always color it green?!

mr_halo

Alien Abducter



Member

Posted May 2, 2005

#25



dragonlady_mothman said:

I've noticed. First it's a gray alien, then it's a kangaroo, then it's that bizzarre dead thing in Texas...

anyone else notice how El Chupa is always said to be gray, but they always color it green?!

601581[/snapback]

4,503 posts Gender:Male Location: Weston Super Mare

"Apparently I have lost the fallatus to speak properly." maybe they think grey is a far too boring colour yes.gif

thus green is used to add interest....

innocent.gif

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Ruins of an 1895 Broadway theatre found under Toys R Us in Times Square

Staff writer By David Cote 140 Posts David is the Theater editor and chief drama critic at Time Out New York and a playwright and opera librettist in his free time. And yes, he can tell you what shows you should see on or Off Broadway right now. Follow him on Twitter at @davidcote.

timeout.com

By David CotePosted: Friday August 5 2016, 3:24pm



Ruins of an 1895 Broadway theatre found under Toys R Us in Times Square

According to reports at Playbill and Curbed New York, construction workers at the Times Square Toys R Us located at Broadway and 44th Street have unearthed the 121-year-old remains of the entertainment complex originally built there: the Olympia Theatre. Theater educator Howard Sherman snapped some up close shots of the remains and kindly shared them with us.

In its heyday, the mighty Olympia housed two venues, the Lyric and the Music Hall, in addition to a roof garden and even rooms for gaming. It was built by theater tycoon Oscar Hammerstein, grandfather to the great lyricist and book writer Oscar

Hammerstein II (born the same same year the Olympia opened). Cool news for anyone interested in city history and the rich, buried culture of Broadway.

Unlike the Hudson Theatre, which returns to service as Broadway's 41st venue in February with a revival of *Burn This* starring Jake Gyllenhaal, there's zero chance the Olympia will rise again. First of all, it's not much more than rubble, fragments of an orchestra pit. Second, the owners of the building are not interested in theater preservation; they plan to erect a massive flagship store for Gap and Old Navy. As a popular destination for live entertainment, the Olympia spaces went through various changes of name and owner. The Music Hall became a movie theater in 1915. And the original structure was demolished in 1935.

So what played at the Olympia for those brief, golden decades? A quick search on Internet Broadway Database turned up some fascinating titles and legendary names. At the Music Hall, song-and-dance pioneer George





Washington Jr, Cohan and Harris Minstels. The American Idea and the humble-sounding The Man Who Owns Broadway. The place saw tons of now-forgotten light opera: Naughty Marietta, anyone? (Actually, the title is now obscure, but one of *Naughty Marietta*'s hit tunes was "Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life.") Ziegfeld brought his Follies girls there in 1908 (and also 1912, by which time the venue was rechristened the Moulin Rouge).



Mae West (left) swished her hips across the stage in A Winsome Widow.

The Music Hall's final theatrical offering (by 1914 it was called the New York Theatre) was a gritty "scarlet trade" exposé by Rachael Marshall called The Traffic.

'THE TRAFFIC' AT NEW YORK.

Sociological Play by Rachael Marshall and Oliver D. Bailey.

"The Traffic," a sociological play in four acts, by Rachel Marshall and Oliver D. Bailey, which was seen last season at a theatre further uptown, came to the New York Theatre last night as another of the popular-priced attractions at that playhouse.

The story of the play is not a very pleasant one, dealing as it does with Agnes Berton, "one of the many thousands who has come up out of the dark places of the world," but the piece is interesting and well staged and played. Bess Sankey gives a capital performance as Agnes Berton and Eva French is capital in the character part of Mrs. Mollie McGuire.

The scenes of the play are laid in a tenement, a room in a cheap hotel, a court house.

court house.

The Lyric, the other big theater in the Olympia, had its own storied successes —scores of now-forgotten comedies, dramas and musicals. It continued producing live work till 1920. Matinee idol Lionel Barrymore rang down the final curtain at the Lyric—sorry, the Criterion Theatre—in 1920 with a French legal drama called *The Letter of* the Law.

9 comments

Mema S 5pts

How can one allow the remains of this unique historical site to be the pit of an Old Navy store!!!!! this is historic content!!! where is in parks department ???

the historic preservation department of New York City?? do you really just cover this up with Flagship stores!! what an incredible find what an incredible history George M Cohan Mae West and you're going to build an Old Navy over it and the Gap disgusting!!!!

Is there no eminent domain in New York City Jackie Kennedy would be appalled

Monkey T5pts

@Mema S Every single building in NYC is historical. The entire city would be a museum if no one was allowed to build over precious sites. That is actually the thing I loved most about NYC...no matter where you were on the tiny island of Manhattan, you KNEW without a doubt that something important happened there and someone ridiculously famous stood where you were at one point.

Mary Louise G5pts

Good thing you can come up and see MAE WEST on her birthday, celebrated on Wednesday, August 17, 2016 this year -- in the same room where she faced a judge who sent her to jail (in 1927).

The venue is now Jefferson Market Library on 6th Avenue and West 10th Street.

Put on your party hat. This event is FREE.

John B5pts

Naughty Marietta is obscure? Is Mr Cote really younger than 30? Sheesh!

Mike Drake K 5pts

I used to work for TRU in the corporate office. I remember when we were building TRU TS, the sub basements are amazing. There was a clay walled tunnel that loked like something that was supposed to be part of the subway as well as a large and very old bank vault style room. I still wonder about their origin, hope there is some follow up during these renovations.

Barry R5pts

NAUGHTY MARIETTA is at least remembered as a 1934 MGM musical adaptation starring Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, typically available for viewing on TCM.

MeeZee Z5pts

@Barry R: I screeched out loud when I read this. Naughty Marietta is certainly not forgotten! Just because the writer isn't familiar with it, it shouldn't be deemed "forgotten"!

Emily C5pts

Oscar Hammerstein was the composer's grandfather, not father.

Emily C5pts

Sorry... Lyricist/librettist's grandfather

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RUSSIAN ROSWELL: Shock video showing 'KGB discovering mummified alien in Egypt' emerges

express.co.uk



RUSSIAN ROSWELL: Shock video showing 'KGB discovering mummified alien in Egypt' emerges

sunday express logo

A SHOCKING video appearing to show Russian KGB agents finding a 13,000-year-old mummified alien in an Egyptian tomb has emerged.

By Jon AustinJon Austin

PUBLISHED:13:52, Fri, Jul 29, 2016 | UPDATED: 15:39, Fri, Jul 29, 2016





YouTube

'KGB agent' in biohazard gear (left) and the alleged alien mummy (right).

Reports claim the black and white video is rare footage of a secret mission called Project ISIS which obtained the remains of a so-called "ancient astronaut".

If true it could catapult the mystery into the league of the July 1947 Roswell alleged flying saucer crash in New Mexico, when it is claimed the US military recovered the bodies of dead

alien pilots.

The ancient aliens myth suggests that civilisations, such as the Egyptians and Incas, were visited by advanced beings from other planets who helped them build the impressive pyramids and other monuments we see today.

These aliens have been referred to as ancient astronauts by believers of the legend.

According to reports with the video, which many suggest is an elaborate hoax, Project ISIS included several Egyptologists from the Soviet Academy of Sciences, scientists, and military experts.

The team was allegedly led by Sami Sharaf, a close aid of president Gamel Abdel Nasser of Egypt.

It is claimed the video was obtained by an unnamed Russian source who claims to have obtained the clip through the Russian mafia from secret KGB archives.

The video shows what appear to be Soviet personnel opening a sarcophagus, said to be in a tomb in the Giza plateau, to recover the remains of a mummy, which it is suggested is of extraterrestrial origin.

The story continues the mummy was two meters high, and carbon-dating said it was about 13.000 years old.

In the clip, Russian soldiers appear to enter the tomb with no protective clothing, but retreat a cloud of fumes erupts when the sarcophagus was opened.

They then return with protective clothes and gas masks.

Sceptics say it is impossible to confirm the video's authenticity, or what the mummy was, and that it was not just a royal tomb of an Egyptian noble or King if the video is real.

But, the Sci-Fi Tv Channel said forensic experts had analysed the film and confirmed it as genuine.

A documentary said testimonies from high-ranking KGB officials corroborated the story and that the mummy was not human.

The reports feature comments from a Viktor Ivanovich, said to be a Russian scientist, who allegedly accessed classified files from the KGB secret archives.



YouTube

The alleged alien as it was found in the film.

In the video, there is no braking - video camera filmed in 1961 with the scab, 15 frames per second. If it was taken at a very old camera the characters would move differently.

xissufotoday.com

He said documents confirmed there was a project ISIS to secure "alien documents and technology which were stored at a secret tomb in the Giza plateau, in hopes to use it for military

purposes."

He said: "There is no doubt that a small group of Russian scientists with military experts have discovered a tomb in Egypt in 1961.

"But in the documents it has never been revealed exactly what was found inside the sarcophagus.

"Only through the sources of the highest ranks of the KGB know that we have found the remains of an alien creature died in Egypt 10,000 years before Christ."

The reports claim 15 boxes filled with alien artefacts were also found, plus hieroglyphic inscriptions, which when translated told of the "winged deities."

Paranormal website xissufotoday.com has dismissed the video as a complete hoax.

A report on the website said it was "sheer fiction" and anything of 13,000 years old would have turned to dust.

It said: "This video recording was made with digital video cameras.

"In the video, there is no braking - video camera filmed in 1961 with the scab, 15 frames per second.



Getty Images

"If it was taken at a very old camera the characters would move differently.

"To the naked eye...the recording is made already at 30 frames per second.

"Most likely using a camera released in the 2000s.

"Video recording is altered in a video editor, so as to be similar, on a recording made on an old film."

The report added that "the characters in the video look ridiculous", saying they wore military costumes available from army surplus suppliers.

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nbcnews.com

Jul 11 2016, 10:14 pm ET

by The Associated Press



Image: Russian Adventurer Takes Off In Hot Air Balloon For Non-Stop Round-The-World Record Attempt

Fedor Konyukhov lifts off from the Northam Aero Club on July 12 in Northam, Australia. Paul Kane / Getty Images

PERTH, Australia — A Russian adventurer launched his hot-air-helium balloon from an Australian Outback town on Tuesday in a bid to set a record for flying around the world non-stop.

Fedor Konyukhov launched his 170-foot tall balloon from the same field outside Northam in Western Australia state where American adventurer Steve Fossett started his circumnavigation of the globe in 2002.

The 65-year-old hopes to complete the journey in a cramped gondola in less than the 13 days that

Fossett took. Fossett died in a plane crash in 2007.

From Northam, 60 miles northeast of the state capital Perth, the 1.6 metric ton (1.8 U.S. ton) balloon is expected to fly east across Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina and South Africa before returning to Australia after drifting more than 19,000 miles.

The launch was originally scheduled for July 2, but weather conditions forced a delay.



Image: Russian Adventurer Takes Off In Hot Air Balloon For Non-Stop Round-The-World Record Attempt

Fedor Konyukhov poses with a boomerang gift before lifting off from the Northam Aero Club on July 12 in Northam, Australia. The 65-year-old Russian adventurer aims to set a new world record by circumnavigating the globe without touching down in under 13 days. Paul Kane / Getty Images First Published Jul 11 2016, 10:14 pm ET

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We made our summer intern eat a s'mores burger

August 12, 2016The ExpressThe Express By Samuel Shepherd

Good evening from the BDN Portland office on Congress Street. Our intern had a big lunch. Then he wrote about it.

Nosh Kitchen Bar on Congress Street is known for its preposterously gluttonous entrees, including burgers with fried mac and cheese buns, churro tacos and pork belly apple pie.

When I found out it also serves a dessert burger with s'mores ingredients, I had to try it. I love s'mores, but I haven't managed to get to the Marshmallow Cart before it packs up for the day. Plus, I'm pretty skeptical of Portland food trends.

The S'mores Burger includes Nutella, four lightly toasted marshmallows, vanilla ice cream and dulce de leche on a brioche bun dusted with Nosh's signature bacon dust.

When it arrived at my table, I gawked at it, not knowing where to start. Someone from the table beside me told me to just press it down and go for it. So I did.

I took one bite and I felt like I needed a shower.

But it was really good. After eating nearly a whole falafel, I really wanted to hate it. It made me feel awful about myself, but it was really good.

With all the sweet flavors on the burger, I figured it couldn't possibly be as good as it sounds. You have to eat it with a spoon, or else you're going to be covered in ice cream and Nutella. Also, eat it fast, because it will melt.

At \$9, this was a good dessert to share with another person.

Is this the best s'more in Portland? I'm still looking for you, Marshmallow Cart. — Sam Shepherd

BDN Portland is a member of the BDN Maine Blog network.

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A compendium of information, resources and discussion on notable nineteenth century American murders.

Saturday, June 14, 2014

The Sailor and the Spiritualist.



Alfred and Althadine Smith had been married for more than twenty years but over time their lives had grown apart. He became a Great Lakes sailor interested more in drinking and carousing than in raising a family; she became a professional clairvoyant. When Alfred's neglect turned to physical abuse and Althadine filed for divorce, she had the foresight to send the children away and bring in a friend for support and protection, but her clairvoyance failed when she was unable to predict the tragic consequence of letting Alfred stay just one more night.

Date: January 31, 1886

Location: Cleveland, Ohio

Victim: Althadine Smith & Louisa Jane Wilson

Cause of Death: Blows from a hammer

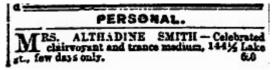
Accused: Alfred Smith

Synopsis:

Alfred Smith and Althadine Fisk had grown up together in Oswego, New York and married in 1865 when both were still in their teens. Outwardly they appeared to be happily married, raising two children, Dora and Wesley, but their marriage had never been easy. Alfred was a sailor on a Great Lakes schooner, a job that kept him away from home during the summer months, and although he was well paid, over the years he had become more inclined to spend his wages on drunken sprees than in supporting his family. During the winter months he was happy to live off his wife's earnings

and, on two occasions sold the household furniture when Althadine did not bring in enough to meet his needs.

Althadine Smith became interested in the growing Spiritualism movement and was soon aware that she had the ability to communicate with the spirit world. She would go into a trance and allow an array of spirits to communicate through her, including an Italian girl, Thomas Paine, several Presbyterian ministers and Gypsy Madge, who was her controlling spirit. She advertised in newspapers as a clairvoyant and trance medium and claimed to have the ability to see into the future and predict stock and commodity prices.



Through her growing practice as spiritual advisor, Mrs. Smith was able to support herself and the children during the summer months, but when Alfred was home from the lake there was not enough money to support them all. Albert Smith

was constantly arguing with his wife and sometimes the fights would lead to physical abuse. Around 1880 Althadine had all she could take and left Oswego for Chicago. Alfred planned to give away the children and take off himself, but Althadine returned and they reconciled. They decided to move to Cleveland Ohio for a fresh start.

In Cleveland Althadine Smith did quite well as a clairvoyant with many prominent and wealthy clients. She gave regular lectures at the West Side Progressive Lyceum, a Spiritual organization that she founded and helped manage. But for Alfred, very little changed. He was still a lake sailor, gone during the summer month and when he was home the old patterns reemerged. He was abusive and often drunk, contributing little to the support of the family. He and Althadine were continued fighting until Althadine had enough and threw him out.



They had a nice apartment in a building called the Crocker Block on Superior Street. It included a small office where Althadine could meet privately with her clients. In the hall outside she hung signs advertising her business. But Alfred, who now lived in a sailor's boarding house, would hang around outside and harass the clients making it impossible for Althadine to do business.

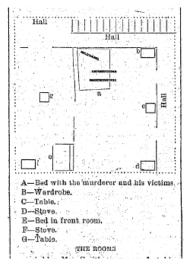
On Friday, January 29, 1886, at the urging of her friend and fellow Spiritualist,

Mrs. Louisa Jane Wilson, Althadine went to a lawyer and filed for divorce, charging Alfred Smith with gross neglect and extreme cruelty. She also petitioned for custody of the children and to restrain Alfred from selling or removing any household property. The divorce was granted and the story was published in two Cleveland newspapers soon after the papers were served. Althadine knew that Alfred would cause trouble so she sent the children to stay with friends in different parts of the city, and arranged for Mrs. Wilson to stay with her for companionship and protection.

In addition to Mrs. Wilson, several other people were at the apartment Saturday night, including Dr. J. F. Sell another Spiritualist. Though Dr. Sell was married with two children he was having a relationship with Mrs. Wilson and they would use the Smith's apartment for their trysts. This was a constant source of contention for Alfred Smith.

Smith was drunk when he arrived at the Crocker Block to beg his wife to take him back. Althadine packed Alfred's clothing in a satchel and put it in the hall, but she would not let him into the apartment. He climbed in through a transom between the hall and a room that served as both bedroom and kitchen. In the sitting room he saw his wife and flew into a rage, grabbing her by the arm and twisting it. Althadine began screaming and Mrs. Wilson ran outside to find a policemen.

By the time Patrolman John Carroll arrived Alfred had cooled down considerably and was saying to his wife that he would "meet her half way" on their disagreements. The patrolman left, saying that he would be on call if there was any more disturbance. Reluctantly Althadine gave in to Alfred's pleading to stay in the apartment just one more night.



The next morning, Mrs. Hattie Wright, janitress of the Crocker Block heard someone groaning in the Smith apartment. When no one answered her knocks she got a stepladder and looked in through the transom. When she saw that everything in the room was covered with blood she ran for help.

A police officer forced open the door and found Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Wilson lying on the bed in the sitting room; both of their skulls brutally crushed. Lying between them was Alfred Smith, his throat was slashed but he was still alive. Lying on the floor in the thick pools of blood was a carpenter's claw hammer and an open straight razor. The women were dressed for bed but Mr. Smith was fully clothed so it was first thought that they were murdered in their sleep but closer examination showed that one of Mrs. Smith's fingers was broken indicating that she had tried to ward off

the blows.

Alfred Smith was rushed to the hospital but his neck wound was only superficial, not cutting the windpipe or any major blood vessels. He was given twelve stiches and when he was fully conscious he was charged with murder.

Trial: January 27, 1887

Alfred Smith was scheduled to be tried for the murders of his wife and Mrs. Wilson in November 1886. A jury of twelve men had been chosen from a pool of thirty-six but when the defense discovered that one member of the pool had been from the wrong jurisdiction, they moved that the entire jury be thrown out. The judge sustained the motion and the trial was rescheduled for the following January. In the second trial jury selection was handled with extreme caution and the process took more than a week.

When he had been interviewed in the hospital, Alfred Smith maintained an air of detachment and indifference, so much so that reporters speculated that he was preparing for a plea of insanity. The true course of his defense remained a mystery until the prosecution rested and Smith's court appointed attorneys called him to the stand to testify. He told the court that all of his problems with his wife stemmed from Mrs. Wilson and other Spiritualists who he believed were of low moral character. He had caught Mrs. Wilson in bed with Dr. Sell and he told the court "I did not want her and Dr. Sell around there sucking tongues before my children." Mrs. Wilson had threatened him with a knife and had once hit him with a poker.

He said that on the night of the murder his wife, Mrs. Wilson and Dr. Sell were together in the office when he went to bed. Around 3 or 4 o'clock he was awakened by someone trying to slash his throat.

Someone else was holding him down, there was a scuffle in the dark and someone hit him with a hammer. He managed to get the hammer away from the assailant and began swinging wildly hitting everyone within range. It was too dark to tell who they were or even whether they were men or women. He did, however, believe that the person who tried to slash his throat was Dr. Sell.

Though very few believed Alfred Smith's testimony it seemed to have some effect on the jury. On their first ballot four voted for first degree murder, four for second degree or manslaughter, and four for acquittal. The group favoring first degree were not anxious to hang the defendant and soon agreed on second degree murder but the four for acquittal were tenacious and the jury argued for nearly twenty-four hours before finally agreeing on second degree murder.

Verdict: Guilty of second degree murder

Aftermath:

Alfred Smith was sentenced to life in prison and was taken to the Ohio Penitentiary in Columbus.

The West Side Progressive Lyceum held memorial services for Althadine Smith and Louisa Jane Wilson, whom they considered martyrs to their cause. Their funeral plans however, arranged by Dr. Sells, were dashed when Mrs. Smith's brother took her remains back to Oswego and Mrs. Wilson's mother held her own funeral, refusing to have anything to do with the Lyceum. She blamed the Spiritualists and Dr. Sells in particular for the death of her daughter.

Sources:

2 comments:

Jim Schmidt says: July 22, 2014 at 4:37 PM

[&]quot;Alfred Smith's Awful Story." Daily Inter Ocean 11 Feb 1887: 1.

[&]quot;An Abusive Husband." Cleveland Leader 30 Jan 1886: 5.

[&]quot;Butchered;." Cleveland Leader 1 Feb 1886: 1.

[&]quot;Cool and Collected." Cleveland Leader 2 Feb 1886: 8.

[&]quot;Divorce After Twenty Years." Plain Dealer 30 Jan 1886: 8.

[&]quot;Drink and Develtry." Logansport Pharos Tribune 1 Feb 1886: 0.

[&]quot;Horror!" Plain Dealer 1 Feb 1886: 1.

[&]quot;Martyrs Mourned." Plain Dealer 8 Feb 1886: 8.

[&]quot;On The Stand." Plain Dealer 11 Feb 1887: 5.

[&]quot;Out of Sight." Cleveland Leader 4 Feb 1886.

[&]quot;Personal ." Cleveland Leader 12 Nov 1883: 5.

[&]quot;Smith's Grim Smile." Plain Dealer 3 Feb 1886: 2.

[&]quot;Smith's Respite Somebody's Mistake Throws the Murder Trial Over." Plain Dealer 23 Nov 1886: 8

[&]quot;The Trial Begun." Plain Dealer 4 Feb 1887: 8.

[&]quot;To Be Tried For Murder." Plain Dealer 27 Jan 1887: 8.

[&]quot;Thank you" to David Loiterstein of Readex for bringing this case to my attention. Posted by Robert Wilhelm

Great story and great research Robert! I think this may be my favorite since the Tenants Harbor post...and you know the chase that set me on! Keep up the great work!

Robert Wilhelm says: July 28, 2014 at 12:15 PM

Thanks Jim, glad you enjoyed it! I hope the chase is going well.

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Santas from all over the world meet to talk shop

July 21, 2016 yahoo.com

(Reuters) - With just five months until Christmas, Santas from around the world are gathering in Copenhagen for a mid-season break at the annual World Santa Claus Congress.

The annual conference gives them a chance to network, meet the public and get into shape for the busy days in December.

This year 140 Santas from 12 countries gathered in the Danish capital for the three-day event.

Santa Cherry from Canada, who is taking part for the fifth time, said there was much more to being a Santa than just the clothes.

"A successful Santa is not just about the costumes and the clothes. You have to have Christmas in your heart. You have to have the love of children and caring and giving in your hear to be a really successful Santa and it's not something you can make up. It has to be in you and people know, they can see it." she said.

The World Santa Claus Congress has taken place at the Bakken amusement park near Copenhagen since 1957 and always in the summer which is Santa's off season.

"I think the congress was started as a way of bringing Santas from all over the world together and sharing ideas and sharing our love of Christmas and being Santa and it's just joyous. It's great to be here," said Santa Ian from London in the United Kingdom.

During the congress they have the opportunity to discuss important issues concerning their trade, such as presents and weight regulations for Santa Clauses. One of the most hotly contested topics is the date for Christmas Eve.

For Santa Allan from Denmark, there is only one correct date.

"I think the main question will be when is it Christmas Eve. Because everyone is talking about have you decided when that Christmas Eve will be or are you disagreeing like you used to? But the Danish guild is saying we have to have Christmas Eve on December 24th," he said.

The most important part of the meeting is for the professional Santas to meet the public. Apart from parades there is also some sightseeing, a foot bath in the sea, Christmas cake baking and storytelling for the children. On Wednesday (July 20), Santas had to complete an obstacle course.

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After 'Scary Lucy,' Ball's hometown to unveil new statue

August 4, 2016 yahoo.com



In this Wednesday, July 20, 2016 photo, artist Carolyn Palmer prepares to apply a cold patina to her bronze statue of Lucille Ball in Saddle River, N.J. The sculptor was chosen to create a replacement statue for one dubbed "Scary Lucy," in the late actress Ball's hometown. The muchmaligned statue of Ball will be replaced after it drew worldwide attention as "Scary Lucy," according to the mayor of the western New York village where the 1950s sitcom actress and comedian grew up and her life-size bronze has stood since 2009. (AP Photo/Mel Evans)

CELORON, N.Y. (AP) — What could be scarier than a statue of Lucille Ball that was so hated it was dubbed "Scary Lucy"? Being the sculptor hired to replace it.

"It was completely intimidating," said Carolyn Palmer, whose new Lucy is to be unveiled Saturday in Lucille Ball Memorial Park in the actress' western New York hometown of Celoron.

"You can't please everybody," Palmer said by phone from her New Jersey studio, where she was putting the finishing touches on the bronze sculpture she began nine months ago. "But overall, I just really, really hope that I please the town of Celoron, please Lucy's family and all her fans. ... Fingers crossed!"

It's hard to imagine she could do any worse than Dave Poulin, whose 2009 version was so thoroughly panned for looking absolutely nothing like the comic actress that fans launched a Facebook campaign last year with the name, "We Love Lucy! Get Rid of this Statue."

Poulin said he ended up receiving hundreds of angry emails and even death threats for his donated piece, which depicted Ball from the famous "I Love Lucy" episode in which she auditions for a "Vitameatavegamin" health tonic ad. Critics blasted its disturbingly wide-eyed and even zombie-like face.

After Poulin's offer to redo the statue for free was declined, a town selection committee looked at dozens of sculptors before going with Palmer, best known for her sculpture of Pope Francis, created for his visit last year to New York City. Private donors are covering the estimated \$250,000 cost.

To capture Ball, who died in 1989, Palmer enlisted three different models and studied photos, movies and, of course, all those TV shows from the 1950s.

Palmer said she wanted to show her subject's energy, glamour and confidence, evoking movement with her dress blowing in the wind.

Harder to capture, Palmer said, was Ball's penchant for wearing "sort of painted-on makeup," which doesn't always translate in bronze. "She's a stunning woman. I had to do a little bit of exaggerating in certain areas to bring that out."

Celoron Mayor Scott Schrecengost said he's hoping the work, which he's seen, puts to rest "a very bad story that started a year ago."

Then again, Scary Lucy has been such a draw (Schrecengost has seen people brush off the snow in the middle of winter to take a selfie) that there was talk of moving it to the National Comedy Center under construction in nearby Jamestown. But the plan for now is to relocate it to another spot in the park.

Schrecengost knows that might not sit well with the fans who wanted Scary Lucy gone.

But, he said, "It's been an icon in itself."

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This Haunted Ohio
University Building has a
Secret Corpse Stain
Where a Body Lay Dead
for an Entire Month



ohio-university's-secet-corpse-stain

In America, it's hard to throw a stone and not hit a creepy abandoned hospital. These shadows of our past are dotted throughout the country, grim reminders of how we once treated our ill and unwanted. While some of these buildings are littered with old patient files, stained gowns, and ghosts, one former hospital in Athens, Ohio might have the most sobering reminder of the past hidden on its top floor: an unerasable, humanshaped stain where a patient's corpse laid untouched for the better part of winter.

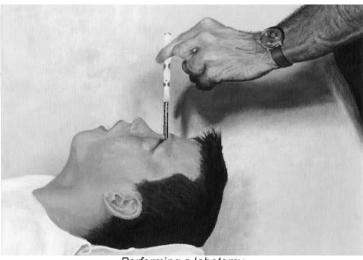
Once one of Ohio's largest hospitals for the mentally ill and the criminally insane, The Athens Lunatic Asylum was the pinnacle of care when it opened in January of 1874. One of the first hospitals to be built using the "Kirkbride Plan", a standardized method of building mental institutions for self-reliance, compassionate treatment, and wide-open spaces, the asylum quickly gained a reputation for its high standards and began to treat an influx of Civil War veterans suppering from a condition that we now recognize as post-traumatic stress disorder.



Athens-Asylum-Administration-Building-1905

Unfortunately, as word of the hospital's stellar care spread, the number of its patients began to rise to uncontrollable levels. The asylum quickly began to fill with the homeless, the elderly, and those who had become a financial burden on their families. It wasn't uncommon for people to be admitted for masturbation, rebelliousness, or even being a bad housewife. Regardless of the reason for admittance, by the 1950s, the hospital had swelled to nearly two-thousand patients – over three times its capacity.

The staff, realizing they could use the hospital's growth to their advantage, began to put the patients to work. Soon, the facilities' farm was turning a nice profit built on the backs of the mentally ill.



Performing a lobotomy

While profits, patient numbers, and staff greed continued to rise, quality of care steeply declined. Patients were beaten, tightly restrained in their beds for several days at a time, and regularly subjected to mass lobotomies, shock therapy, and other experimental procedures like sustained icewater submerging. During the mid-1900s, the Athens Lunatic Asylum was a waking nightmare for anyone unlucky enough to be housed there.

The hospital finally closed its doors in 1993, having donated much of its property to Ohio University, who had already begun to renovate

some of the buildings. Almost as soon as the old portions of the asylum reopened, which became known as "The Ridges", students began to experience paranormal activity. Disembodied screams would ring through the empty halls in the middle of night, mysterious figures would walk the former grounds of the demolished Tuberculosis Ward only to disappear into thin air, and electronics would seem to go on the fritz, causing lights to flicker and phones to fail.



The Ridges in Athens, Ohio

The Ridges | Via Athens Conservancy

Paranormal investigator Nicholas A. Lantz recounts a particularly horrifying discovery in his book *Ghosts and Legends of Athens, Ohio*. In December of 2013, he was able to gain access to The Ridges for a proper investigation, and had the rare opportunity to visit the basement where he found an abandoned room with slimy brick walls. As his flashlight pierced the darkness, he was met with the disturbing scrawlings of a former patient.

"There is something following me.. something hunting me.. I hear things that aren't said.. I'm going crazy i here.. I see it in my dreams.. the glowing horrible fans and eyes.. the demon.. help me help me. they told me to keep a journal.. I did something terrible and painted it and now it is out.. went into their room while they were sleeping and slit mommy's throat.. she stopped moving.

KILL THEM."

While tales of the grounds' paranormal activity quickly became the topic of discussion among Ohio University students, there was one remnant of the old hospital that was whispered about more than the others: the corpse stain.

Margaret Schilling when housed at The

Ridges in the 70s



margaret-schilling-athens-ohio

Margaret Schilling was not a particularly troubled patient at the asylum, so she was allowed a good amount of freedom, and spent her days wandering the grounds, even going to town on her own from time to time. On the night of December 1, 1979, Margaret Schilling went missing.

When Margaret didn't return, a search party was organized at the hospital, but days of searching turned up no trace of the missing patient. Forty-two days later, a maintenance worker was surveying an unused ward formerly dedicated to patients with infectious

illnesses when he made a gruesome discovery. Behind a locked door, her clothes folded neatly on the floor, lie Margaret Shilling's naked body. She'd somehow managed to get locked inside the abandoned room, and to the horror of onlookers, her corpse was found in such a bad state of decomposition that her body fluids had soaked into the concrete, creating a permanent stain.



margaretridges-1024x632

Nearly four decades later, the corpse stain remains hidden inside the building, unable to be scrubbed away. For the students who share the building (a portion of which is now used as an art museum), the spirit of Margaret Shilling will occasionally make herself known through the rattle of a phantom door-handle echoing through the halls, a reminder of her eternal attempt to escape from the locked room on the top floor.

Have you ever encountered an eerie reminder of death in a haunted

building? We want to hear about it. Drop us a line on Facebook, on Twitter @WeirdHQ, or in the comments below.

Greg Newkirk

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Scottish poltergeist story is highly questionable, even if the police say they saw something

wordpress.com

https://idoubtit.wordpress.com/2016/08/14/scottish-poltergeist-story-is-highly-questionable-even-if-the-police-say-they-saw-something/



OK, fine, here ya go! Many readers of The Telegraph (UK) think the Rutherglen polt is supernatural.

Ghosts / Sham Inquiry / Skepticism

Scottish poltergeist story is highly questionable, even if the police say they saw something

August 14, 2016August 15, 2016 idoubtit5 Comments

A story about a family in Rutherglen, Scotland, who called in police to report paranormal phenomena, rode

the media wave yesterday into today. The original source was the local Rutherglen Reformer paper that appears digitally on the *Daily Record* (UK) website. Here is the main story: Rutherglen family call in police after witnessing paranormal activity

A desperate Rutherglen family were forced to call in the police after witnessing apparent paranormal activity in this home.

[...] officers were left stunned when they witnessed clothes flying across a room, lights going on and off, oven doors opening, mobile phones flying through the air and even a chihuahua dog on top of a seven foot hedge.

The terrified family, who live on Stonelaw Road, called police in a panic on August 8 and 9 after two days of bizarre occurances. It is understood a sergeant and two PCs witnessed the incidents.

Several question IMMEDIATELY arise and are not answered by any of the news reports:

- Who were the officers who responded?
- Did the offices actually witness what is described? Where are the detailed reports?
- Did the family call on both days? Why?
- "It is understood" that various policeman witnessed it what does that mean? Why are no names included?

I looked for all reports of the incident. What I found was a repetition of the *Daily Record* story with the same unsourced quotes. All stories include a stock photo of a chihuahua as well, which I thought was humorous. Adding the bit that the dog was affected by the phenomena adds greatly to the interest in the story, but also allowed for some egregious exaggeration as I note later on.

Let's establish the situation, though. In a nutshell, the story is a parade of second or third hand anecdotes, lacking details and specifics, by the family (a mother and teenaged son) and unnamed police sources. Not very credible at all. Here's what else we get from the same piece [with a timestamp of 10:09, 13 AUG 2016 BY DOUGLAS DICKIE]

And another source was quoted in our sister paper, the Daily Record, saying: "These were incidents that were witnessed by our own officers. Incidents that are not easily explained."

"But officers with more than 20 years' service are saying they've never seen anything like this. It really is something that down-to-earth police officers are having trouble getting their heads round."



OK, fine, here ya go!

Is this "source" an official police spokesperson? Why no name? That is very suspicious and not credible. Another article from same media source provides this incredible headline.

'Poltergeist' baffles hardened Police Scotland officers after they witness paranormal activity including levitating dog [13:00, 13 AUG 2016 BY JANE HAMILTON]

"Baffled" is used far too often. But did they really witness a levitating dog?

Even a chihuahua dog which was playing in the garden was then discovered sitting on top of a seven-foot hedge.

A source said: "The officers attended expecting it to be a mental health issue but they witnessed the lights going off, clothes flying across the room and the dog sitting on top of the hedge."

Apparently, the dog just appeared on a high hedge and there is not a witness that it levitated. So, this headline claim is, technically, a lie. All we get from a sourced spokesperson is this:

A spokesman for Police Scotland said: "On 8 and 9 August police attended a house in Rutherglen to reports of a disturbance. No evidence of criminality was found and advice and guidance was given to the family."

That's a typical official statement. But it's not at all like the unnamed source info. Was one of the officers providing the source information? Was it firsthand? We just do not know but that would be actually important details to have. So, we can list what seems to be reliably true as follows:

- 1. A family is having some serious issues in their home, and
- 2. The cops investigate and find no criminal activity, but confirm the serious issues exist. They provide no explanation that's not their job.
- 3. The police are not used to seeing this type of report so it's a bit bizarre for them and they don't know how to handle it. (Baffled might not be the exact right word for this, then.)

The family is said to be "devoutly Catholic" and "extremely distressed" having "experiencing violent and unexplained circumstances". They left the residence and are living with relatives. There is no word on if the activity followed. The new report says the cops contacted the Catholic Church.

The family at the centre of the drama are devoutly Catholic and police did seek assistance from the church.

A priest has been to the house in Stonelaw Road and performed what has been described as a 'blessing' at the property.

The police also appear to be investigating the family's background and history of the property to see if similar reports occurred. It's also noted that they are "working with doctors and social services to provide support." That's a very reasonable course of action.

What should we think of this story? First, note the popularity of Enfield poltergeist tale this past year. There were two movies about it including the big budget and completely fictionalized "The Conjuring 2" giving the story from 1977 new life. When such stories are passed around, they are more apt to be remembered and believed as true, even if portrayed as fiction.

Second, I immediately noticed the similarities to the Ammon family case of early 2014. This case also had Hollywood-like depictions of a haunting and played up the points that credible witnesses like the police and medical staff had been a bit freaked out by the events. The same exaggeration of anecdotes took place. The facts were almost certainly less dramatic. Professional investigators weren't allowed in. Another common point is that the Ammon family was religious as well, believing in demons. It's worth consideration that these two cases stem from religious families because their beliefs frame and direct the interpretation of anomalous events and what to do about them. Then some rather mundane or innocent events take on a frightening life of their own.

This Rutherglen story was posted on my Facebook group Group of Fort – a serious discussion about anomalies and paranormal claims in the news. Again, the idea that police witnessed it was used to bolster the idea that it's true and should be taken at face value. I disagree. It's a fallacy to assume that just because a police officer (or a doctor or a pilot or a scientist) says they saw something weird means it should be considered more reliable. It bears attention, for sure, since they are not motivated to suggest they have experienced the unexplainable. But, **even police make bad witnesses sometimes and can be fooled by misinterpretation**. Everyone can. Anecdotes are really poor evidence because the witnesses are inherently biased by their worldview and are not usually in a position to objectively observe what is happening. The situation is certainly not controlled and usually can't be replicated under controlled conditions. Why give special weight to the police observations regarding these observations as paranormal? Any visitor to the house could have reported seeing the exact same, unexpected, things.

Today, the mother has spoken out about the unwanted attention they are receiving. Unfortunately, the Shreenan family is experiencing the backlash of paranormal news events as well as being deluged by many self-proclaimed "experts" of the paranormal offering their services. The *Daily Record* reporter of this story also takes these "experts" ridiculous claims of paranormal interventions as true. None of these folks are objective or scientific. They believe in the paranormal and work to reinforce that belief. It's guaranteed they would find something in the house if they are allowed to go in. And it's certain that an objective comparison of all their independent reports (controlling for cross-contamination, of course) would be different and not provide any testable hypothesis or reliable conclusions that could be used as convincing evidence of a poltergeist phenomena. I say that securely because in over 100 years, we still have no convincing body of evidence to say what, if anything, poltergeist (or hauntings) are. We have a lot of stories. We have a lot of speculation. That's all.

The *Daily Record* keeps updating the story with new pieces, knowing a hit when they see it. They contacted "Scotland's only official demonologist," Jason Love. Love commits the same fallacy as the others by thinking that, "The testimonies from the police strengthens the case that this was poltergeist activity." It does no such thing.

Love is a psychiatric nurse and, as such, provides some good advice about what he would first explore such as physical or mental activities going on in the background, psychiatric issues, or medications that can cause hallucinations. He also points out that, "If you have a parent who says they're hearing and seeing things, soon the child will pick up on that and begin to 'feel' these things too."

In other words, if the parent is a believer and frames these concerns in a way that suggests paranormal or supernatural entities, the child can be deeply affected and will be drawn into that scenario as well. It's too bad that Love then goes off the deep end with talk about "residual energy" and baseless (and wrong) paranormal tropes:

This is when visual ghosts actually manifest on the property and are usually connected to the house or the land. It could be that the property was built on an old graveyard, battlefield or even a convent.

He puts forth unsupported speculation about the "negative energy" of adolescents causing poltergeist activity, speaking as if he is an credentialed expert in polt activity. I would refer instead to actual professionals in parapsychology who have studied poltergeists and who admit they don't know what causes the incidents. Psychic "energy" isn't plausible, doesn't make scientific sense, and isn't supported by solid evidence. Rampant speculation that sounds more like it came from a movie script (which is might have) is very different than the tone from historical parapsychology researchers. To top it all off, the *Daily Record* mentions that the TV show *Most Haunted* was contacted. So, you know where this is going – on to the faux-documentary para-reality junket. How annoying. If this really IS unusual activity, it should not be relegated to pretend investigation for a TV show.

This is where we run into a big problem – one that I've been focused on for the past several years. The media reports these stories as real, and self-styled inexperienced paranormal researchers and "psychics" descend on the story and play the investigator role. Then, journalists treat them as actual experts and as knowledgable. It presents a distorted view of logical and rational investigation since what these ghost hunters are doing is not investigation but reinforcing the socially popular belief in the paranormal. It's sham inquiry in order to present a



Many readers of The Telegraph (UK) think the Rutherglen polt is supernatural.

dramatic setup and conclusion that the world is mysterious and baffling, and that paranormal activity exists. This is not how we establish facts and reasonable conclusions to questions about the world. Inquiring minds just don't want to believe, we want to KNOW.

Science is the best way we have of gaining reliable knowledge. Science is a long and difficult process undertaken by a community with resources and rules to follow. What science isn't is one or even a number of people with anecdotes that can't be reproduced, tested, or verified multiple times. A sound conclusion requires a collection of evidence with threads that intertwine and reinforce each other to support a common plausible explanation for what is going on. It can even be a new and bizarre explanation but it has to be supported by things we already know to be true and to make internal sense.

Poltergeists, ghosts and hauntings have been studied exhaustively by amateurs and professionals for over a hundred years. We still can't even define what they are or how to reliably experience them. So how can we come up with well-rounded explanations about them? Sources like the *Daily Record* and all tabloid news sites that love to cover stories like these, write shallow accounts in contrast to the type of thorough, careful reporting that I would like to see. I'm afraid a boatload of cases will never be enough unless these data collectively can be verified and ultimately provide an internally consistent, testable theory about the phenomenon.

That doesn't mean that cases like this aren't really interesting. They probably have some fascinating explanation (or several explanations). Just not a paranormal one. The *Daily Record* editorial staff noted that this family needs support. They do. They deserve help. Just not from amateur investigation groups or people who call themselves "demonologists". But, once again, this media outlet mischaracterizes the situation by reinforcing the police officer's credibility as witnesses. The *Daily Record* has overblown the reports by the police and provided very little facts to back up their dramatic headlines. Instead, they are rolling with the popular appeal of the story, even providing related footage that is not only hoaxed but misattributed and unchecked.

Inline with the Rutherglen story updates is this one: Spooky Footage Shows Poltergeist Trashing Man's Home as It Hurls Utensils and Slams Doors, dated 13 August 2016, claiming a video titled "Angry Demon Ghost destroys kitchen" shows a kitchen being trashed by a polt. The *Daily Record* says it was recent, by a man named Brad Prior. But Prior's YouTube page dates the video January, 2016. And, Brad looks exactly like a known YouTuber called Mellowb1rd who produced a series of videos just like this years ago. Oh, wait, the same video was posted on Oct 1, 2010, also as "genuine" even though Mellowb1rd has been roundly accused of faking every one of these sensational videos with clear thread. That's some extraordinarily crappy "journalism" there *Daily Record*.

Notice the drawer and cabinet door open and things fly around, but they don't close and nothing defies gravity. Only the open oven door closes. Conveniently left open. The videos are immediately dubious as they can be reproduced without recourse to supernatural entities.

This startling local paranormal story reveals that the *Daily Record* is a poor source of factual news. If this was a real confounding case, I would hardly look to them to provide respectable reporting of it.

I have reached out to the Society of Psychical Research in the UK to see if they have been contacted and if they will investigate this spontaneous case. They don't commonly do that as much as they have in the past. And, ideally, such an investigation should include trained skeptical investigators who have definitively exposed past hoaxes. I'd like to see some reliable, objective and informed reporting on this curious case, especially in the media. I'll keep wishing... but it won't happen. Spooky tales get eyeballs and clicks – that's all that seems to matter to the media.

5 thoughts on "Scottish poltergeist story is highly questionable, even if the police say they saw something"

1. Paul Rooney says:

August 14, 2016 at 6:46 pm

I was intrugued by this story because I am originally from Rutherglen and attended the same parish church as the people affected. But I quickly tired of the lack of substance provided by the various media outlets who reported on it.

However I too heard anecdotes that the police reports were kosher. Concerned that I was being too easily swayed by what probably is a fishwife's tale that has grown arms and legs, I decided to look for a sceptic's viewpoint. And here we have one. Most ebjoyable, very balanced and exactly how I would like to articulate myself if I was discussing the subject.

Thank you!

2. Ethan K. says:

August 14, 2016 at 10:10 pm

Thanks for exploding this false report with your sizzling hot acumen, Sharon. I wish we could see you uncovering the bare facts firsthand, instead of these frauds.

3. grouchyfarmer says:

August 14, 2016 at 11:43 pm

The whole story is troubling. As you said, the lack of specific names for sources is concerning. When the media quotes a source, it generally names the person unless the media has been specifically asked not to, in which case the media reports that fact as well. Here we have nothing. Not even the name of the "official" police spokesperson. That's rather unusual, at least here in the US.

The actual police report doesn't do anything to corroborate the paranormal claims either. It says simply the officers saw something odd, that it wasn't criminal in nature, and then left. That's it. Police reports are generally much more detailed than that, especially if something truly strange happened, because those reports are often used as evidence later. I suppose they could have falsified the report in the belief that it would have placed their jobs in jeopardy if they reported the events described, but lying on a police report is a serious crime in itself. Since it seems the story is general knowledge, why would they bother lying?

idoubtit says:

August 15, 2016 at 8:33 am

The excuse I can think of is that they are considering hoax and suspect is may be an internal family issue that they can't really do anything about. So they chose to limit details. Or, the case is so bizarre, they feel they will be ridiculed if they provide details. So, either way, I can understand why it is the way it is but if it's the latter, they should call in the Scottish SPR as the most reputable source to assist instead of the parade of pretenders who will claim investigation credibility.

4. Daniel Anthony Gautreau says:

August 15, 2016 at 5:04 pm

Very well put. If the journalist or paper won't explain why they won't name their sources, the whole story should be dismissed out of hand. It's not exactly an event involving national security, so no explanation equals no credibility.

~Advocate for science appreciation, critical thinking and evidence-based inquiry~

Research fields include ghosts, monsters, and mysteries of the world, paranormal, psychics, belief, memory, anomalies, oddities, zoology, alternative medical claims, science education, pop culture, and the environment.

Creator of Doubtful News, Sounds Sciencey, and Practical Skepticism.

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Screaming teenage girls exorcised for FIVE HOURS after being 'possessed by demons' while summoning evil Mexican ghost



Three teens who tried to summon an evil Mexican ghost had to be exorcised for more than five hours after they were were "possessed by demons".

The girls were filmed screaming and convulsing on the floor of a church after taking the ouija board-inspired Charlie Charlie challenge.

In a clip of the exorcism one of the teens can be seen lurching forward

and trying to grapple another youngster.

She is quickly restrained by police and church workers who are clutching bibles in a desperate bid to revive the girls.

The clergy tried to exorcise the girls for five hours by frantically reciting prayers before the youngsters were transferred to a local health centre in Iquitos, Peru.



YouTube / Latina Noticias

One of the teenage girls lurches forward in the clip

A source said: "These girls apparently played the famous 'Charlie Charlie' and apparently made contact with this game in this place and were possessed by this demon."

Thousands of youngsters have played the challenge with many claiming they've been able to communicate with a Mexican ghost called Charlie.

It's supposedly an "ancient Mexican tradition"

involving placing two pencils on a piece of paper in the shape of a cross before writing the words yes and no inside the four squares formed by the pencils.

The three youngsters had to be held down by police and church workers as they were exorcised for five hours

Brave participants then repeat the words "Charlie, Charlie are you here" to summon a visit from a demon.



But those who don't say goodbye to Charlie, reportedly experience paranormal situations such as hearing voices, things being moved, shadows and sinister laughing.

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YouTube / Latina Noticias

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Jurassic 'Sea Monster' Emerges From Scottish Loch

nationalgeographic.com



http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/09/storr-lochs-sea-monster-jurassic-fossil-paleontology-science.html

The fossil beast from the Isle of Skye is the most complete skeleton of an ichthyosaur yet found in Scotland.

By Michael Greshko

PUBLISHED September 5, 2016

More than 50 years after its discovery on Scotland's Isle of Skye, scientists have unveiled a monster that would make Nessie blush: a 13-foot-long reptile that ruled the seas 170 million years ago.

The fossil, dubbed the Storr Lochs Monster, is a nearly intact skeleton of an ichthyosaur, a family of extinct marine reptiles that lived alongside the dinosaurs. The creatures were the dolphins of their time: fast swimmers with long, narrow snouts and cone-shaped teeth perfect for eating squid and fish.

Discovered by an amateur fossil collector, the Storr Lochs specimen is the most complete marine reptile ever recovered in Scotland from the age of dinosaurs. Yet for decades, the skeleton remained in storage because it was entombed in extremely hard rock.

Now, a partnership between the University of Edinburgh, National Museums Scotland, and energy company SSE has allowed paleontologists to expertly free the skeleton from its stony casing. On September 5, the freshly exposed remains made their triumphant public debut.

"Although some people think that sea monsters live here today in our lakes, there were actually real ones that lived here over a hundred million years ago," says Stephen Brusatte of the University of Edinburgh, one of the lead researchers analyzing the fossil.

Norrie in (the) Skye With Fossils

The Storr Lochs Monster was discovered in the summer of 1966, when Norrie Gillies—the longtime manager of SSE's hydroelectric Storr Lochs Power Station—took a Sunday afternoon stroll on a picturesque beach north of the station. There, he noticed something strange jutting out of the rocks: strings of vertebrae that looked like stacks of chocolate-brown ashtrays.

An amateur fossil collector, Gillies quickly realized the magnitude of what he had found. He dashed off a letter to the Royal Scottish Museum, which excitedly sent a team to the site several weeks later to remove the fossil. (The Royal Scottish Museum has since been absorbed into National Museums Scotland.)

"He was always interested in the environment 'round about him," says Allan Gillies, Norrie Gillies's son and an electrical engineer with SSE. "When he discovered this, he realized it was a much bigger thing. This isn't the sort of thing you find in your back garden."

For decades, Norrie Gillies maintained periodic contact with the museum about the fossil, but the specimen remained in storage. He died in 2011 at the age of 93 without ever seeing the full creature he had discovered.

Keeping the Storr Lochs Monster entombed, however, was a matter of necessity. The fossil was trapped in sedimentary rock that had hardened when lava flows caked and baked the Isle of Skye during the Paleocene,

about 66 to 56 million years ago. Exposing it without the right tools or expertise could have proved disastrous.

"He did the right thing [when] he got in touch with the museum; the museum did the right thing [and] kept it safe for decades," says Brusatte.

The stars began to align in early 2015, when Brusatte and his colleagues came across the fossil in the museum's collections. To the scientist's surprise, Allan Gillies and his sisters contacted him several days later, after news stories highlighted Brusatte's study of a different ichthyosaur. The siblings and Brusatte began corresponding, and he soon recruited the noted conservator Nigel Larkin to prepare the fossil for display.

They didn't have sufficient funding, however, until Allan Gillies reached out to SSE, his and his late father's employer. The company soon agreed to support the research.

"SSE is delighted to be playing its part in bringing the Storr Lochs Monster to life," Martin Pibworth, an SSE managing director, says in a statement.

The Best-Ever Fish Story?

Now that the fossil has been fully revealed, paleontologists can see if the ichthyosaur bears resemblances to other known species or represents a first of its kind. The find also adds a key data point to the Middle Jurassic, a time noted for its scant fossil record.

"In the oceans [of the Middle Jurassic], it looks like there was a big turnover between smaller, more primitive reptiles and larger, more derived groups," says Brusatte.

"It looks like that, though, because we don't have that many fossils from that time period anywhere in the world. That's what makes this potentially an internationally important specimen. It's one of the few good fossils of an ichthyosaur that comes from this 'dark' period."

For Allan Gillies, who was six years old when his father found the ichthyosaur, the fossil carries scientific—and personal—significance.

"Dad's not around to see it himself, but I know he'd be very, very pleased to know that it's finally being displayed, and he'd also be very pleased to know that it's the company he worked for that helped to make it happen," he says.

"It's sort of completing the story."

Michael Greshko writes online science news stories on everything from animal behavior to space and the environment.

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Hundreds of mysterious orbs washed up on beaches of Devon and Cornwall identified as 'sea potatoes' telegraph.co.uk

At first they looked like baseballs or perhaps esoteric vegetables. Finally the hundreds of odd orbs washed up on beaches and have been identified as a species of urchin known as a sea potato.

The sight of hundreds of the objects alarmed holidaymakers in Devon and Cornwall who steered well clear, fearing they could be poisonous.

A dog walker, however, was brave enough to take one home as a memento, the Sun reported, before throwing it into the bin as a precaution.

Scientists have identified the objects as sea potatoes, a sea urchin which can grow up to three inches in diameter and able to survive in waters up to 650 feet deep.

They have been dubbed sea potatoes because of their dried brownish yellow shells.

Hundreds of the urchins were washed up on the beach between Penzance and Marion on Wednesday night. The last time as many appeared on land was in May 1995.

The sea potatoes or Echinocardium cordatum, to give the urchin its scientific name, lives in sand burrows and are commonplace on some sandy beaches.

"You get lots of them on Torbay main beach, for example," told the Guardian. "They are related to starfish and usually covered with little spines."

Mass strandings were not particularly rare, he added.

"I think such things happen from time to time and are entirely natural – bit like bushfires."

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GA man arrested for having sex with goat

016/08/04 Wtvm.com



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GA man arrested for having sex with goat

Thursday, August 4th 2016, 9:30 am PDTThursday, August 4th 2016, 2:53 pm PDT
By Tanita Gaither, Digital Content Director
Email
Connect
tgaither@wtvm.com
Follow @TanitaG WTVM

PAULDING COUNTY, GA (WTVM) – A Georgia man was arrested and charged with having a sexual encounter with a farm animal late last month.

According to a Paulding County Sheriff's police report, Freddie Wadsworth, of Douglasville, was charged with bestiality after his neighbors reported an indecent

exposure incident on July 27.

Witnesses reportedly told police that they saw a man, later identified as Wadsworth, performing a sexual act on a goat, which the sheriff's office identified as a white female goat.

Wadsworth has since been released from jail.

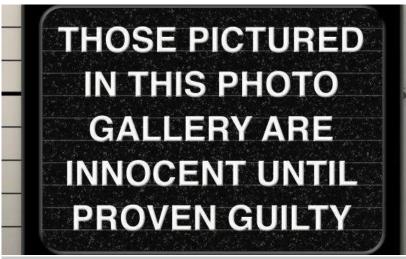
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(Source: Paulding County Jail)



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Shanxi - Zhang Xiao . "a glimpse of a world of pagan custom, dreamlike and entrancing"



Posted By: 5T1V AUG 15, 2016

"These photographs were taken in Shanxi Province in northwest China. They document old customs originating from pagan ritual practices. They are, in effect, a voodoo-esque form of totem worship. A number of these ancient customs still survive and remain some of the most important cultural practices during the Lunar New Year throughout most of Shanxi. It appears that the participants have created a dramatic and otherworldly stage—dressing in

stunning costumes and exquisitely painting their faces to represent the identities of Gods otherwise long forgotten.

When I first witnessed the participants line up and then parade around the village, I repeatedly kept asking myself whether I had literally stepped into some sort of wonderland. The scenes I gazed at were far too bizarre and illusionary to be connected to events in the real world.

Compared with the monotony of their usual rural lives, everyone involved into these celebrations transformed into something quite extraordinary—appearing no longer as mere peasants, but as powerful Gods from ancient mythology. With every glimpse of the unfolding events,

I saw an overwhelming sense of joy and happiness that saturated the atmosphere and I tried not to disturb this beautiful dream state I found myself in. I truly hoped that I would never wake up."

Zhang Xiao (simplified Chinese: 张晓; traditional Chinese: 張曉, born 23 November 1981, in Yantai) is a Chinese photographer who has published several series of photographs of China in flux. Zhang used a Holga again for the square, colour photographs of traditional rituals surrounding the lunar new year in Shaanxi. The book Shanxi was first published by Little Big Man in the United States; Sean O'Hagan describes it as "a seductive book, a glimpse of a world of pagan custom that somehow endures against the odds, dreamlike and entrancing".

















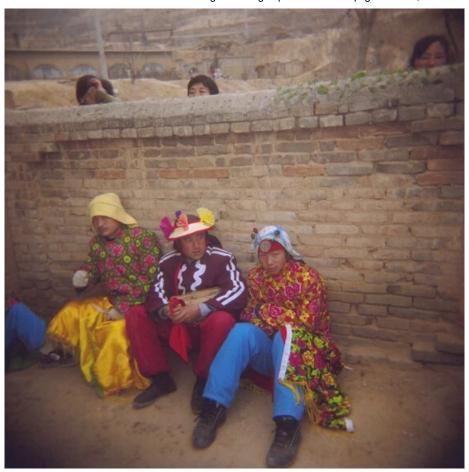




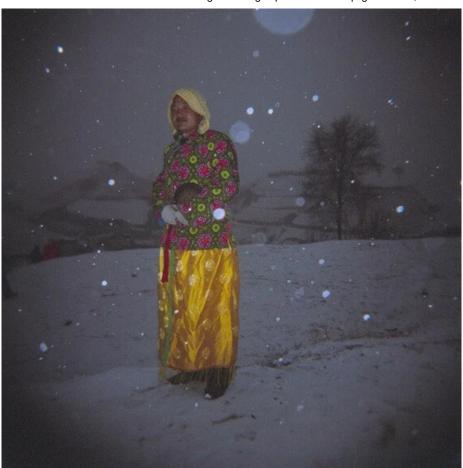






































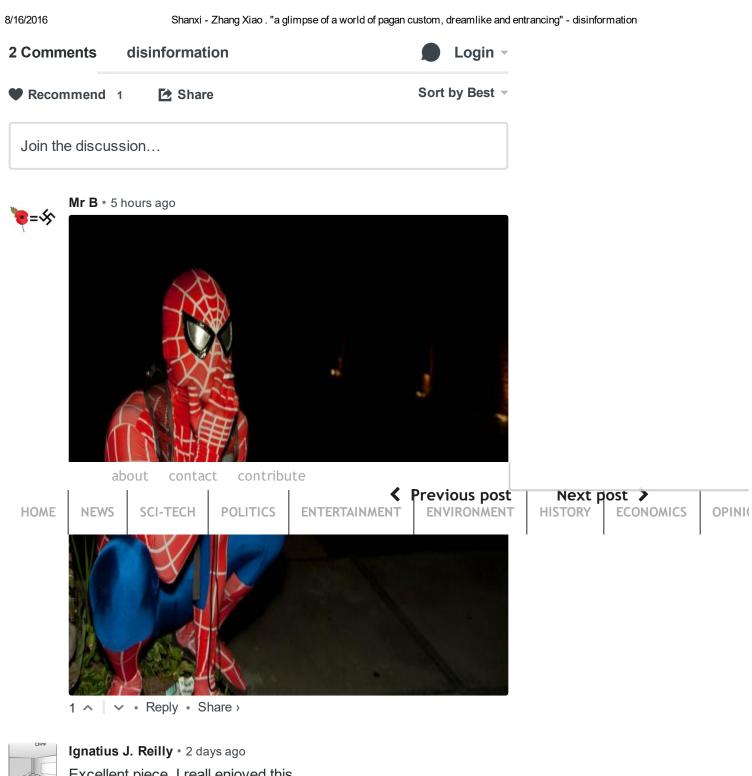
This article was originally published in LEXICON Magazine

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5T1V

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Excellent piece. I reall enjoyed this. Thanks.

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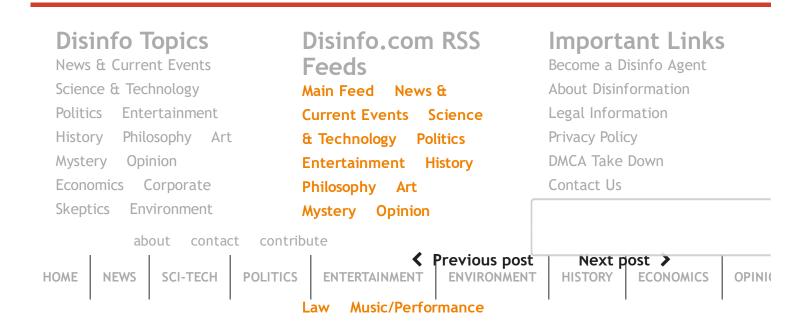
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Shanxi - Zhang Xiao . "a glimpse dreamlike and entrancing" - disi

Shanxi – Zhang Xiao . "a glimpse of a entrancing"

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By Ben Hooper | Aug. 26, 2016 at 3:01 PM



This Port Jackson shark was still alive when it was discovered in a roadside puddle in One Tree Hill, South Australia. Photo courtesy of the South Australia Police

ONE TREE HILL, Australia, Aug. 26 (UPI) -- South Australia police said they have "ruled out the possibility of a Sharknado" in the mystery of a shark found in a roadside puddle.

Police said a member of the public contacted authorities Friday morning to

report finding a small shark partially submerged in a roadside puddle in the town of One Tree Hill.

Fauna Rescue South Australia responded to the scene and transferred the shark, believed to be a Port Jackson shark, to a water tank. The group said the shark was alive at the time of its rescue, but later died.

"How the shark came to be in the puddle is still a mystery, however, police have ruled out the possibility of a Sharknado," police said. "It is believed the shark may have been caught earlier today and dumped, or was kept as a pet but was growing too large for its tank."

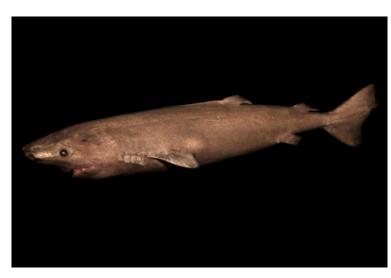
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scientificamerican.com

... and it doesn't reach sexual maturity until around 150.

• By Jennifer Frazer on August 11, 2016



In a jaw-dropping revelation, scientists announced today in the journal *Science* that radiocarbon dating of structures in the eye lenses of 28 female Greenland sharks reveal that they do not reach sexual maturity until around 156 years of age, and live to be at least 272 -- and possibly as much as 512. Although most of the sharks were less than 200 years old, two were far older and the oldest female in the study was judged to be around 392 (+/- 120) years old, a number that, if accurate, beggars belief and crowns the Greenland shark the unquestioned vertebrate

longevity champ-een.

The tradeoff for these eye-poppingly venerable ages is a life confined to the black, icy waters of the coasts of northern Europe, Greenland, and northeastern North America. There, Greenland sharks cruise at depths up to 6000 feet searching for any prey or carcasses that happen into their path. They eat mostly fish, but pieces of seals, horses, moose, polar bears(!), and reindeer (even whole carcasses), have all been found inside them. But they have rarely, if ever, consumed a human, possibly because most people do not fancy pleasure-swims on the Greenlandic Riviera -- or perhaps the sharks rarely visit the surface.

As the centuries roll by, the sharks typically reach 16.5 feet long and weigh several thousand pounds. There is no question they are the largest fish that haunts Arctic waters, and they are among the largest sharks in the world. In a *Science* podcast interview(shark segment starts at about 15:00), Nielsen said he feels it is the combination of near-freezing body temperatures and hence a low metabolic rate with the tremendous size these sharks attain that leads to their supernumerary lifespan.

A special structure in the lens of the vertebrate eye called the nucleus was used to date the sharks in this study. Traditionally, mineralized bones reveal the age of vertebrates, but sharks famously lack these. Their skeleton is made of softer cartilage that cannot be dated as bone can.

To get around this, scientists turned the optical lens nucleus, which is made of crystalline proteins that are not metabolized during the life of the organism. Its center is formed during fetal development. The shark can thus be dated by measuring how many carbon-14 isotopes remain in the center of the lens.

The carbon-14 concentration of seawater is known and, like all radioactive isotopes, carbon-14 has a stable and known decay rate into nitrogen-14. When the shark is born, a fixed amount of carbon-14 is stashed there. Over the centuries, it decays and is not replaced. By measuring how much

carbon-14 is left in the lens nucleus of a Greenland shark's eye, we can get a rough idea of how old it is.

Intriguingly, the team was able to detect the effects of hydrogen bomb tests of the 50's and 60s, which began to show up in marine life in the early 1960s. Exploding hydrogen bombs ejected enormous quantities of carbon-14 at that time. This surge appeared as a "radiocarbon bomb pulse" that formed a convenient, if unfortunate, calibration point for the study.

The first shark to show signs of the pulse must be about fifty years old. It turned out to be around two meters long -- and there were only three sharks this size or younger out of the entire 28 sharks. That shocked the scientists because they knew that females don't reach sexual maturity until they attain four meters. 50-old sharks were still effectively children.

To date sharks older than the radiocarbon pulse, the scientists created a shark age model based on a pre-existing radiocarbon calibration curve called Marine13. Although any model is only as good as the data that goes into it and its designers' skill -- and the designers had to contend with many challenges like potential regional carbon isotope variations -- the ages obtained are not outside the realm of plausibility. Scientists had already guessed the sharks were very old because growth rates have been calculated to be less than a centimeter a year, and the largest Greenland sharks measure north of 5 meters (500 centimeters).

Although bowhead whales may live in excess of 200 years and are mammals to boot, it seems clear now that alone among vertebrates, Greenland sharks are "Eldest". What would it be like to live for 400 years? I think I can safely say that if it entails swimming around alone in freezing, murky water subsisting on a diet of carrion and raw fish, I am content with my lot.

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Wisconsin farmer, 16 cows dead after being overcome with manure fumes | Fox News

foxnews.com

http://www.foxnews.com/us/2016/08/18/wisconsin-farmer-16-cows-dead-after-being-overcome-with-manure-fumes.html

Published August 18, 2016

A coroner revealed Tuesday that a Wisconsin farmer and more than a dozen cows died when they became overcome by fumes from a huge manure holding tank.

According to WAOW-TV, Michael Biadasz, 29, was found by other farmers early Monday when they arrived at Biadasz Farms near Amherst to haul away manure from the football field-sized tanker.

Portage County Coroner Scott Rifleman said that the deaths of Biadasz and at least 16 cows are under investigation, but that they were probably overcome by methane or sulfur oxide.

Rifleman said the farmer agitated the tank and that this, along with warm upper air temperatures, created a deadly dome of air.

Bob Biadasz, the farm's co-owner, told WAOW-TV that the tragedy only occurred because of unusual weather conditions which created "perfect storm."

Other cows were also sickened by the fumes.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Is Shropshire the most haunted county in the UK?

metro.co.uk

Violet FennWednesday 10 Aug 2016 3:56 pm



Is Shropshire the most haunted county in the UK?

The creepy sight of Ludlow Castle in Shropshire (Picture: Getty)

Positioned on the Welsh border and sitting astride the Roman route from London to Holyhead in north Wales, Shropshire has enough bloody history to supply endless tales of hauntings and ghostly goings on.

Many counties declare themselves the most haunted in the UK, but Shropshire must have more claim to the title than most.

Here's a roundup of some of the most popular

Shropshire ghost tales, from creepy castles to spooky pubs – and even a haunted town hall.

Shrewsbury Castle



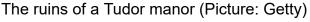
The Castle was first established c. 1070 (Picture: Getty)

The Castle was first established c. 1070 (Picture: Getty)

Shrewsbury Castle is rumoured to play host to 'Bloody Jack', the particularly nasty ghost of a 12th century serial killer of young women.

Versions of his legend vary, but it seems he was eventually caught in the act and hung, drawn and quartered. A number of people have reported seeing his ghost over the years in various parts of the castle.

Moreton Corbet Castle



This infamous local landmark is supposedly haunted by the ghost of a Puritan who was cast out by the Corbet family after initially being harboured by them during the reign of King James I.

He took shelter in nearby woods, returning only to curse the house and its residents with this declaration: 'Rejoice not in thy riches, not in monuments of thy pride, for neither thou, nor thy children, nor thy children's children shall inhabit these halls.'



The ruins of a Tudor manor (Picture: Getty)

The curse was indeed fulfilled, because it scared the family so much that none of them would live in the house again and it fell into ruin.

Prince Rupert Hotel

Dating from 1150 and once home to the grandson of James I, the Prince Rupert supposedly has several invisible residents.

The spirit of a jilted bride who hanged herself on her wedding night roams the conference suite and another room is home to a young man who killed himself after his girlfriend left him.

Guests have reported having their pillows removed when no one is there and at least one person claims to have caught a spirit on camera

Nags Head



There are numerous spooky goings-on at this pub (Picture: Google Maps)

There are numerous spooky goings-on at this pub (Picture: Google Street View)

I have personal experience of this one, as I worked as a barmaid in the Nags Head for nearly a decade.

Almost everyone who's ever worked there has a tale to tell about strange goings on – jukeboxes switching on in the middle of the night, furniture being

shifted when your back's turned and the sound of barrels being moved around in the cellar when you know there's no one else in the building.

There are supposedly three ghosts in the Nags – a coachman who hanged himself, a woman who threw herself out of the window under the wheels of a passing coach and horses and a soldier who shot himself whilst on leave during WWI.

Legend has it that all three died after looking at a painting that is hidden on the inside of a cupboard in one of the upstairs room and indeed that anyone who sees it will be dead within the year.

I saw it dozens of times and am still alive and kicking, but let's not spoil a good story.

Wem Town Hall

All but destroyed by fire in 1995, Wem Town Hall hit the news when a photo of the blaze was published in which a young girl could clearly be seen standing in the flames.



10 real-life haunted places you can visit

Locals believed it to be the ghost of Jane Churn, a young girl who was accused of arson in the town in 1677.

The photograph was declared 'not tampered with' by a former president of the Royal Photographic Society (although he was generally dubious).

The Dun Cow



Shropshire is full of creepy pubs (Picture: Google Street View)

Shropshire is full of creepy pubs (Picture: Google Street View)

Another Shrewsbury pub, the Dun Cow was built by Roger de Montgomery in 1085 and is one of the oldest in the country.

In the 1980s, the then-owner woke to find the ghost of a monk looking into her baby daughter's cot. Two years later, her daughter saw the monk herself in the middle of the night, waking up her parents by screaming about a scary man.

Many of The Dun Cow's patrons have reported seeing a shadowy figure pass through walls in the pub.

Kynaston's Cave

Humphrey Kynaston was a notorious 16th century highwayman who prowled the countryside on his horse Beelzebub.

The local sheriff removed part of the Montford Bridge to prevent Kynaston's escape, only for his horse to jump the gap to freedom. To this day, the spot is known as Kynaston's Leap.

Kynaston – and his horse – lived out their days in a cave high up on Nesscliffe where they had a room each. It is said that on a quiet night, Beelzebub's hooves can still be heard near the caves.

Cosford Air Museum



Museums can be scary too (Picture: Loop Images/UIG/Getty)

Museums can be scary too (Picture: Loop Images/UIG/Getty)

The Avro Lincoln Bomber on show at Cosford is said to be haunted by its former pilot, who was killed in a plane crash nearby.

A BBC reporter investigating the story in 1991 recorded sounds that would normally be made by a crew preparing for flight and several staff claim to have seen someone moving in the plane when the museum is closed.

Ye Olde Punchbowl Inn, Bridgnorth

The Punchbowl lays claim to a number of ghostly sightings, chiefly that of a disfigured former landlord named Harold, who roams the pub with his Irish wolfhound at his side.

He's rumoured to have killed his wife and a little girl called Jesse, who also haunts the pub. The current landlords claim that their son used to talk to Jesse when he was only two years old.

Ludlow Castle

This beautiful spot is reputed to be haunted by Marion de la Bruere, who in 1138 was betrayed by her lover, Arnold de Lys.

Marion was in the habit of leaving a rope hanging from the castle's battlements to enable Arnold to visit her in secret, but one night he used the rope to gain access for his soldiers, who took control of the castle.

When she realised what her beloved had done, Marion slit Arnold's throat with his own sword before throwing herself to her death from the Hanging Tower.

If you sit quietly in the castle at dusk you might see Marion walking mournfully around the base of the tower.

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Spooked visitors to cemetery see body under 'shroud' WAVING at them

08:59, 27 Aug 2016 Updated 09:52, 27 Aug 2016 By Jim Hardy

mirror.co.uk



'It was just lying on the grass next to a grave and it wasn't moving so we all thought it was a dead body'

Visitors to a cemetery were shocked when they thought they saw a body under a "shroud" WAVE at them - but all was not as it seemed.

Jim Matthews, 47, was visiting the graveyard when he spotted the chilling sight and snapped a photo.

WESSEX NEWS AGENCY The dad-of-three said: "Everyone was shuddering - you could see it was a body lying still under a blanket which looked just like a shroud.

"Then everyone jumped when it lifted an arm and waved at people.

"It was the middle of the afternoon and at first people thought it had been a burial where they hadn't got round to putting the body under the ground yet.

"It was just lying on the grass next to a grave and it wasn't moving so we all thought it was a dead body" added the dad-of-three from Ashford, Kent.

"It was a bit of a spooky sight, with it being a graveyard."

The "corpse" - shrouded from head to toe in a brown blanket - had people gaping as they walked through St Mary's churchyard.



WESSEX NEWS AGENCY

The incident took place in St Mary's churchyard

But the mystery was soon solved by another local resident, Steve Salter, who realised it was a rough sleeper who had decided to have an afternoon siesta among the gravestones.

Steve, who took a photo at 3.30pm, said "It seems it was a rough sleeper taking refuge and having a kip in the churchyard but you should have seen the looks the sight was getting from passers by.

"He was lying parallel with another gravestone and was completely covered by the blanket.

"There were lots of people walking past at that time of day.

"Several people went over to see if he was alright but he just waved his arms at them to go away.

"At one point some bellringers even came out of the church and walked past him.

"He was there for about an hour but then it started raining so he collected his stuff up and went."

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Yummy! The Cambodian town where they EAT tarantulas

08:15 EST, 5 September 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk



MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

What do you do when there's a tarantula infestation? Eat them! Cambodian town has a stomach-churning solution to spider surplus

- Tarantulas scurry over many surfaces and drop onto people's heads
- To cope with the infestation locals deep fry

them and eat with herbs

- Practice began in 1970s when famine struck under Pol Pot's regime
- Expelled city dwellers couldn't farm and decided to eat the spiders

By Harriet Mallinson For Mailonline

Visitors to the Cambodian town of Skuon had better watch out for tarantulas - not just scurrying over their toes... but also in their meals.

The market town has been so overrun with the eight-legged creepy crawlies they have taken to eating them.

Known as 'Spider Town', the insects were running all over surfaces in the area and dropping onto people's heads.



The market town of Skuon in Cambodia has been so overrun with eight-legged creepy crawlies they have taken to eating them



But in a gruesome fervour of resourcefulness by the locals the arachnids are now becoming a tasty snack - deep fried and served with a pinch of herbs on a bed of

noodles or rice

But in a gruesome fervour of resourcefulness by the locals the arachnids are now becoming a tasty snack - deep fried and served with a pinch of herbs on a bed of noodles or rice.

They are said to be similar to chicken or cod but, take heed, it's only the legs that should be consumed.

Bite into the abdomen and diners risk munching on innards and the spider's bodily fluids.

Some locals have gone one step further and brewed wine with the hairy critters.

However while many people would no doubt run screaming in the opposite direction at the mere thought of the idea, the practice has been going on in Skuon since the 1970's.

Spiders had always infested the town but it was only when a devastating famine struck the area that residents began turning to the creatures as a food source.



They are said to be similar to chicken or cod but it's only the legs that should be consumed. Bite into the abdomen and diners risk munching on innards and the spider's bodily fluids



Spiders had always infested the town but it was only when a devastating famine struck in the 1970's that residents began turning to the creatures as a food source



Hungry and desperate enough to go to any extreme the locals began to eat the arachnids overtaking their homes. These days however, the dish is considered a delicacy

Under Pol Pot's dictatorship urban dwellers were forced to move to the countryside to work in collective farms and on forced labour projects.

But the exiles did not know how to farm and slowly began to starve.

Hungry and desperate enough to go to any extreme the locals began to eat the arachnids overtaking their homes.

These days however, the dish is considered a delicacy and is very popular with tourists.



Comments (

Thunda007, Thornaby, about 3 hours ago

Nope, sorry. I don't care if it's already roasted - put one of them on my plate and I'm still going to hit it with my shoe.

Chris, Swindon, United Kingdom, about 4 hours ago

Yuck.....

Alan, Des Moines Iowa US, about 5 hours ago

America's beloved, greatest president EVER, king bary ODUMBO, would regularly eat DOGS when he was a tiny lad. I bet dog meat would go well with spiders too.

Spacetrucker, Saltspring Island, Canada, about an hour ago

OMG- So great to see low information, hate filled people voice their opinions on a subject that, as usual, has nothing to do with the topic presented. Idiot, diaper wearing trolls that are afraid of their own shadow. Kinda sad really.

Alan, Des Moines Iowa US, 17 minutes ago

Are you happy with your Junior obamaTARD PM in Canada? He is turning your economy into the same disaster king bary has to the USA.

Bigdog, Fareham, about 5 hours ago

I had one in Skoun truck stop last Christmas eve. en route from Phnom penh to Kratie. It was a lot tastier than you imagine it would be. Would happily eat one again.

2 of 4 repliesSee all replies

Jess, UK, about 3 hours ago

They probably don't taste bad but I simply couldn't overcome the ick factor unfortunately.

bellaboo, wales, United Kingdom, 40 minutes ago

Just eat plants!!! No legs, hair or guts to deal with!!!

Farmer Giles, Truro, United Kingdom, about 6 hours ago

Not much different from lobster or crab.

Walking dead girl, Uk, United Kingdom, about 6 hours ago

I should not be reading this while eating..... yuck!

Luciew, Manchester, United Kingdom, about 6 hours ago

One of the most disgusting things I've ever seen!!

Scottie-Dog, Somewhere Up Norf, United Kingdom, about 7 hours ago

Great! THEY CAN MAKE TARANTULA JAM

Jeffrey Lear, Richmond, United Kingdom, about 4 hours ago

Spread hamster jam on the ground up pops Tulips. Tulips from hamster jam.

wendyheather, London, United Kingdom, about an hour ago

Jeffrey Lear God you are stupid. Pathetic.

Capt Dan, jupiter FL, United States, about 7 hours ago

And one woman was absolutely shocked to find a can of Tesco tomato soup inside her spider!

J. Johnson, California, United States, about 7 hours ago

Forgive me if I'm being culturally insensitive, but I'd rather have a Big Mac. At least I can't be accused of cultural appropriation.

Trooper, Amsterdam, about 5 hours ago

At least when you eat a spider you know what it is, you can't say that with a Big Mac

David Sharp, Toronto, Canada, about 4 hours ago

Mr Johnson, the over sensitive will always find a way to be offended. Enjoy your burger.

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Norway party proposes 'slug hour' to tackle invasive pests - BBC News bbc.com

BBC Norway party proposes 'slug hour' to tackle invasive pests

By News from Elsewhere... ... as found by BBC Monitoring

• 2 August 2016

A Norwegian political party wants people to set aside one hour twice a year and spend it destroying an invasive species of slug.

Inspired by the annual Earth Hour, when people are encouraged to switch off their lights, the Socialist Left Party thinks a similar approach could combat the much-reviled Spanish slug, the VG newspaper reports. The party has also called for a funding boost for efforts to combat invasive species, and says it hopes the Conservative-led coalition government will be inspired to implement the ideas.

Party secretary Kari Elisabeth Kaski tells the paper that she thinks Norwegians would be happy to give up time for some slug hunting. "We have seen how well it has worked with Earth Hour... Norwegians are happy to volunteer," she says, adding that a "coordinated and concerted effort" is needed to tackle the creatures. She points to a municipality in southern Norway which offered people cash in exchange for collecting slugs in 2012, seeing an enthusiastic response from locals.

The Spanish slug - sometimes referred to as the "killer slug" - is now found across Europe, and was first spotted in Norway in 1988. It gobbles everything from green plants to decaying animal remains. While an array of slug-beating ideas fill the internet and probably won't appeal to people of a squeamish nature, a scientist at the University of Denmark warned last year that the only real way to get rid of them is to collect them in a plastic bag, tie the top and chuck them in the bin.

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Here's the blue latte you never knew you wanted

mashable.com 2016-07-13 05:09:19 UTC





Shares What's This? A live blue algae latte is just another colour to the spectrum of coffees out "People think it's going to be a bubble there. Image: Instagram/matcha mylkbar

There is plenty of weird coffee out there, but this one takes the cake.

It's a so-called "smurf latte." available at a vegan café called Matcha Mylkbar in Melbourne, Australia. The bright blue colour in the coffee comes from a teaspoon of something called E3 live blue algae powder. Yes, algae.

The drink also contains lemon, ginger agave and coconut milk — at this point, it's barely a coffee. So what does it taste like?

gummy sweet taste," the café's co-

owner Nic Davidson told Mashable Australia. "You can definitely taste the agave and the lemon. It's a quite sweet and 'soury' kind of taste ... but it's a difficult to explain taste — everyone thinks it's different."

The "smurf coffee" isn't actually on the café's menu, apart from a small sign that most people miss when they visit. Most of the hype has been growing on Instagram, where the café has been posting pictures of the coffee to much fanfare.

"It's been crazy. Over the weekend we've sold well over 100 of the lattes, and considering we're a small 40-seat cafe, it's a lot," Davidson said. "It's like our beetroot and mushroom lattes. We even have people who don't speak English ordering by just pointing to the photo on Instagram."

It's important to note the powder making the coffee blue and its various health claims haven't been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration has been contacted for comment.

In other words, don't expect your blue latte to suddenly turn you into a yoga guru.

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Don't turn back! Spooky snap shows ghost of unmarried pregnant woman drowned 300 years ago

express.co.uk



Don't turn back! Spooky snap shows ghost of unmarried pregnant woman drowned 300 years ago

A SPOOKED woman has claimed to have captured the ghost of woman

who reportedly went missing 300 years ago on camera at a national trust.

PUBLISHED: 14:12, Fri, Sep 16, 2016 | UPDATED: 14:28, Fri, Sep 16, 2016





CATERS

Diane Barron, 46, from Norwich, Norfolk, snapped the eerie spirit leaning with two hands on the wall of the bridge at National Heritage site Oxburgh Hall.

Covered in misty black robes, the ghoul appears less than a meter away from another visitor who was oblivious by her close-encounter.

Mrs Barron was on a trip to the medieval family home built for courtier Sir Edmund Bedingfield in 1482.

Eagle-eyed Mrs Barron, only spotted the unusual figure when reviewing her pictures and is certain it must be a spirit.

Previous online reports claim the figure of a cloaked woman haunts the grounds of Oxburgh Hall, after she mysteriously went missing three-hundred-years-ago.

Despite differing beliefs on what the picture could be online, Diane adamantly maintains that she did not edit her picture and that there was a dark figure on the bridge.

Mrs Barron, a customer advisor, said: "It was just a normal day, sunny with some clouds, we'd used our national trust cards to visit the hall.

"I took several pictures and there were no special events on at the hall on the day.

"It wasn't until later that I saw there was a dark figure on the bridge at the hall.

"When I first took the picture I didn't realise I had taken anything unusual but when I enlarged the picture and zoomed in it gave the chills and friends have looked at it too who have felt the same.

"At first I thought it was someone who was out of focus but as you can see people nearby are in focus

"I enlarged the photo and sent it to several Facebook groups – there have been mixed reactions, some people thought it was someone in fancy dress, others thought it was a mark on the wall.

"But if you check pictures from the hall on Oxburgh Hall, there is no mark against the wall near the bridge.

"I can only go from the photo I took and it was not altered in any way and had not set out to change the photo."

Varying reports have surfaced in the past about hauntings at the location.

My guide tells me there's definitely a ghost spirit there





lan Griffiths

Medium Ian Griffiths who reads psychic meaning from photographs supports the belief that the spirit could be a woman who went missing.

He said: "My guide tells me

there's definitely a ghost spirit there.

"I feel it's a young woman around the age of 23-years-old with long, dark brown hair who was very pretty looking.



"I feel she was around eight months pregnant and was drowned, it was something to do with struggling under the water.

"She was not married, her father worked with the Kings' horses and she's been seen on some stairs inside the castle."

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Scientists add squid tentacles to clothes making ripped fabric mend by itself

16:09, 11 Aug 2016 Updated 16:11, 11 Aug 2016 By Simon Worthington

mirror.co.uk

End of needle and thread? Scientists add squid tentacles to clothes so they heal themselves when ripped



Penn State University release video of self-healing textiles

Make do and mend has long been a mantra about patching up clothes when they're torn and worn - but it could soon become obsolete, as scientists are working on making clothes self-mending.

In what could be the ultimate aid for parents whose children constantly return home with ripped clothing, the revolutionary breakthrough has seen experts develope a textile that can 'heal' itself.

Ripped trousers or a torn shirt usually means getting out a needle and thread or even clothing just being thrown out.

But in future rips in cotton, linen and wool could simply be fixed by firmly pressing the two torn parts together.

Experts in the US have found that by infusing clothing with proteins from teeth from squid tentacles, tears can heal themselves.

For years scientists have been working on self-repairing films that could be placed on to products to boost their lifetime.



Self Healing Textiles

Tips in cotton, linen and wool could simply be fixed by firmly pressing the two torn parts together

One approach has been to coat surfaces with multiple layers of electrolytes of opposite charges.

When scratched, these molecules diffuse through the film toward the defect and repair it, usually with the help of a little water or a dilute saline solution.

But while existing coatings can work guickly, they are often limited. For example, some types crack under warm, dry conditions.

So a team from Pennsylvania State University set out to find a better material to use

The researchers incorporated proteins from squid ring teeth in their coating

The researchers incorporated proteins from squid ring teeth in their coating. These proteins - extracted from suction cups on squid tentacles - are tough and elastic under both wet and dry conditions.

When pressed together in water, cut pieces of cloth that had been dipped in the new coating reattached.

In addition to having applications for everyday self-healing clothing, the researchers say the substance could be used as a "second skin" barrier that would protect wearers from chemical and biological warfare agents.

When pressed together in water, cut pieces of cloth that had been dipped in the new coating reattached



Self Healing Textiles

The study authors reported: "Squid ring teeth hold great promise to provide a broad range of solutions for textile applications due to their ability to self-heal.

"As the cost of production for industrial biotechnology products continues to fall, such self-healing films become increasingly feasible and sustainable for large-scale production."

The findings are published in the American Chemical Society journal Applied Materials and Interfaces.

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Self Healing Textiles

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Steven Seagal continues tour of post-Soviet leaders in name of world peace

Shaun Walker in Bishkek Monday 5 September 2016 Last modified on Tuesday 6 September 2016

theguardian.com

Actor and friend of Vladimir Putin met Kyrgyzstan president and opened World Nomad Games clad in medieval armour and on horseback



Steven Seagal rides a horse at the opening of the World Nomad Games. Photograph: TASS / Barcroft Images Steven Seagal and people in traditional dress at a specially built village, Kyrchin, at the Nomad Games. Photograph: Tass/Barcroft Images

Some travel to see the sights, others travel to relax, but Steven Seagal has a bigger mission: world peace. Or so he says.

The Hollywood actor, who in recent months has been given the red-carpet treatment by various post-Soviet leaders, said on a visit to Kyrgyzstan he wanted "to bring all people together, to live in harmony".

In Kyrgyzstan, amid flaming horsemen, yurts and guest of honour Steven Seagal, 40 nations compete in eagle hunting, stick wrestling, and goat-carcass polo

Last month, Seagal met with Alexander Lukashenko,

president of Belarus and regarded as "Europe's last dictator". Lukashenko fed the actor a carrot, and the pair discussed the weather and the harvest.

Seagal has formed a warm friendship with Vladimir Putin and even been given a rare invitation to the Russian president's residence. He has also paid a visit to Ramzan Kadyrov, the Kremlinbacked ruler of Chechnya who is accused of widespread human rights abuses.



Seagal is currently in Kyrgyzstan, where he opened the World Nomad Games by trotting across the stadium clad in medieval armour atop a horse. He also met with Kyrgyzstan's president, Almazbek Atambayev, who has been accused by critics of possessing an increasingly authoritarian streak.

"You guys are lucky because you have in my opinion a great president," Seagal told local journalists in Bishkek on Monday, ahead of playing guitar at a charity dinner at which tickets sold for \$1,000 per head. "He treated me not as a distinguished guest but more like a friend. We discussed a lot of very important matters. Personal matters, philosophical matters, spiritual matters."

Asked by the Guardian why he had embarked on this unusual tour of meetings with post-Soviet leaders, Seagal said he believed Putin, Lukashenko and Atambayev to be great men.

"You don't have to be a great man or a good man or an ethical man to be the president of a country, but the fact of the matter is in my humble opinion these presidents that God has blessed me with the



Steven Seagal and people in traditional dress at a specially built village, Kyrchin, at the Nomad Games.

Photograph: Tass/Barcroft Images

honour to know are all really, really great men," the actor said.

"Along with the blessings that God has given me to know these great people, it is my deepest desire to transcend any kind of politics, particularly those that are divisive and manipulative and untrue." He criticised western media for their coverage of the region, saying western countries "are jockeying to say things that are not true".

Seagal also said he planned to shoot films in Kyrgyzstan in the future, and was looking for "tough men, fighters,

people who can do stunts on horses and beautiful women" to star in them. The actor said it was "probably – not for sure – but probably my first time in Kyrgyzstan". He was given a hero's welcome in the central Asian nation, and his press conference ended with applause, followed by journalists gathering with the actor for a group photograph.

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By Ben Hooper | Aug. 15, 2016 at 4:19 PM



A sea lion winds up to fling a sting ray at a kayaker in California. Screenshot: Newsflare

DANA POINT, Calif., Aug. 15 (UPI) -- A California kayaker who encountered a sea lion swimming near a harbor recorded the moment the animal threw a sting ray at her.

The video, filmed earlier this year in Dana Point, Calif., shows a sea lion swimming in the distance ahead of the kayaker.

The sea lion splashes around in the water, apparently wrangling with some intended prey,

before surfacing.

The sea lion violently shakes its head side to side before throwing its prey, a sting ray, at the kayaker.

The sting ray hits the water before it reaches the boat.

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Police: Brain found at burglary suspect's home in Penn Township

cumberlink.com

http://cumberlink.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/police-brain-found-at-burglary-suspect-shome/article 095f52b5-3db2-59ec-98c1-1a2da26165a5.html



Joshua Lee Lona

A man currently at Cumberland County Prison in connection with a rash of burglaries in the Midstate now faces new charges after a human brain was found at a home in Penn Township.

On Thursday, Joshua Lee Long, 26, of Carlisle, was charged with misdemeanor abuse of a corpse and conspiracy to commit abuse of a corpse after a human brain was found in a Wal-Mart shopping bag under the porch of Robbie Lee Zoller, a home that Long was known to frequent, according to an affidavit of probable cause filed by Pennsylvania State Police.

Police said a relative of Long's found the brain and contacted him in prison to ask about it. Long told the woman that it was a human brain and that he and Zoller used the formaldehyde to smoke "wet" marijuana, according to the affidavit.

Long later confirmed the story to police and said that he and Zoller had named the brain "Freddy," the affidavit stated.

On June 21, police seized the brain and transported it to Cumberland County Coroner Charley Hall, who later said a forensic pathologist determined it was a real human brain, police said.

Police said it was believed the brain was a stolen teaching specimen.

Long is currently in Cumberland County Prison being held in lieu of \$100,000 bail for his role in a rash of burglaries in Cumberland and Perry counties.

Zoller is also wanted in connection to the burglaries.



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The myths of Little Switzerland from child murder to headless man

September 11th 2016 hulldailymail.co.uk

The strange history of the Humber Bridge Country Park from a 'murdered child' to the headless biker

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: September 06, 2016

By Mike Covell







Is the Humber Bridge Country Park haunted?

Ambitious plans have been revealed to open up the Humber Bridge Country Park as a leisure and tourist attraction.

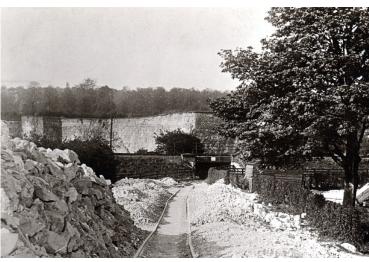
The park, which opened as a nature reserve in 1986, has a long history and throughout the years many stories, myths and legends have been told about it, from murders to witches and curses.

The area is known for its chalk quarry and for centuries it was used to produce "whiting", a type of whitewash used in houses and industry. The mill there dates from the 1850s and was operated by the Hearfield family, of Hull.

After the quarrying ceased, work began on Humber Bridge and since then, the Country Park – or Little Switzerland to give it its traditional name – has become a popular haunt for tourists, dog walkers and bird watchers.

1) Little Switzerland

How did "Little Switzerland" get its name? It was first mentioned in the Hull Daily Mail, on Wednesday June 9, 1909, when it was mentioned that a member of the public had lost an item near Little Switzerland. Later in the year, the Hull Scouts were given permission to establish a camp in a field at Little Switzerland by Mr Hearfield.



Little Switzerland in 1910.

Later, it was revealed that the mountainous chalk tops, on the quarry sides, looked like the snow-capped peaks of Switzerland, and the name stuck.

2) The 'murdered' child

It has long been said that a child was murdered at the Country Park, but despite searching through many old newspapers, no such case has been found. Could it be that people are getting the story mixed up with an actual child murder in the village of Hessle?

On Wednesday, April 17th 1872, newspapers around Britain reported that a child had been found dead in a back yard in Hessle. A rag had been forced down

the little girl's throat, causing suffocation. The murderer was never found.

3) The headless man

Legend has it that a headless man stalks the woodland at night with one lurid theory suggesting he is the ghost of a motorcyclist beheaded in the park "sometime in the 1960s". However, no one has ever seen him and the

reports usually come second or third-hand from friends of friends.

Again, there is a kernel of truth. In October 1962, motorcyclist Leslie Hutchinson was beaten to death and while stood near his bike in Hessle. His body was dragged beneath a caravan but soon discovered. Reports of his gruesome suggested a length of wire had been placed across the lane to throw him from his motorbike. He was then "beheaded".



Police investigating the murder of motorcyclist Leslie Hutchinson.

However, David Price, a pathologist, revealed the cause of death as a blow to the head and strangulation.

Charles Frederick Green pleaded guilty to the murder at Leeds Assizes on January 28th 1963.

4) The Hessle 'ghost'

One of the strangest of local hauntings concerns the Hessle "ghost". It was first seen in 1894 and the following year, the Mail reported:

"There is a rumour abroad at Hessle that the "ghost" which caused so much commotion in the village last year has once more paid a visit, and is to be seen in the neighbourhood of Switzerland-hill, which is just the sort of place to successfully carry on these foolhardy tricks. It is to be hoped that the pranks of this 'unearthly' monster may soon be stopped."

The sightings attracted Victorian paranormal investigators but the explanation disappointed them. It turned out to be a cow that had more white patches than black patches, making it appear like a ghostly visitor!





The Hessle chalk cliffs in the early 20th century.

5) The Vanishing Cyclist

In the early 1980s a group of boys rode their bikes from Hull to Little Switzerland, to look at the construction of the Humber Bridge. Two of the boys leading the pack noticed a third, much faster, cyclist in front of. Every time they made an effort to catch up, he rode faster, until eventually they arrived at Little Switzerland. Then, the boys watched, horrified, as the mysterious cyclist rode straight off a cliff of the quarry!

According to the boys, they went to a local café where they were told that the phantom vanishing

cyclist was seen regularly. It was said that the cyclist had died by plunging over the edge of the quarry and his ghost continues to replay the tragedy.

6) Witchcraft and other tall tales

'CURSED': The Black Mill.

Over the years, it has been claimed that Little Switzerland was a haven for witches in Victorian times and that Satanists practised here in the 1980s.

Another creepy tale concerns the Black Mill, so-called because it is supposedly "cursed!" All of these claims are unfounded.



4 comments

ruebymurry | September 06 2016, 5:52PM

I remember the Hessle murder well. The victim "Leslie Hutchinson's wife was having an affair with a man called "BIGBY". And was pregnant by him. There was a question "Will it be a BIGBY or a little B". They were all jailed for life.

- spag_monster | September 06 2016, 4:12PM It isn't haunted.
- gritter9 | September 06 2016, 3:01PM

Great article. I was always up that way with my little dog before I left Hull years ago. On hot nights I have stayed in the quarry all night and never saw anything ghostly.

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http://www.bbc.com/autos/story/20160906-plague-pits-the-london-underground-and-crossrail

BBC

It's long been thought that train lines in London tunnel through bodies. But as a recent discovery shows, the truth is more complex — and odd — than you might think



(Credit: Crossrail Ltd/Transport for London)

By Amanda Ruggeri

6 September 2016

When the bubonic plague broke out in London in 1665, it wasn't the first time the

disease terrified the city. But it was one of the deadliest outbreaks that the city had ever seen — and, possibly, the most infamous.

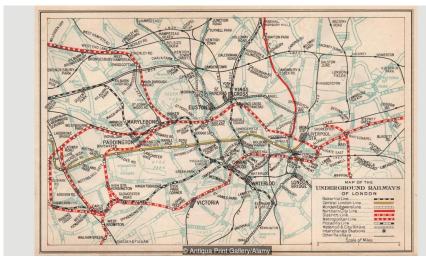
It's long been thought that there might be victims of that crippling epidemic buried underneath London... under and alongside the trains people use every day.

This week, scientists confirmed there are.

The plague wiped out a great deal of 17th-century Britain. In London, it's thought that fatalities reached up to 100,000, roughly one-fifth of the population. Popular accounts of the epidemic described its horror in detail. And they described the mass graves, known as 'plague pits', which are said to have gouged land across the city. Hundreds of bodies were said to have been hastily buried in these pits without coffins, care or ceremony.

Two hundred years later, London opened its first underground railway — the world's first — in 1863. By the century's close, a spider web of track linked stations as far as Shepherd's Bush and Bank, Hammersmith and Mansion House.

If you look at these early routes, you'll notice something odd: They don't take the straightest, fastest line from point A to B. Instead, they meander. They curve. Almost like they're avoiding something.



This map from 1938 shows the strange, meandering routes of London's early Underground (Credit: Antiqua Print Gallery/Alamy)

It didn't take long to put two and two together. When engineers went to design these underground railroads, the story goes, they tried to avoid plague pits — either because they didn't want to disturb the dead, or because the bodies were packed too thickly to bore through.

[Tube train lines] meander. They curve. Almost like they're avoiding

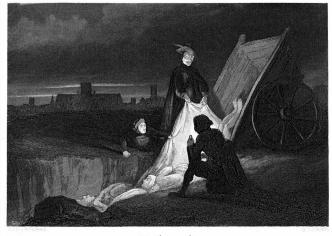
This map from 1938 shows London's early Underground

something.

Various resources hold that there are a number of places where engineers hit bodies... or tried to avoid them. Catharine Arnold, in her 2006 book Necropolis: London and Its Dead, writes: "At the spot where Brompton Road and Knightsbridge now meet, excavations for the Piccadilly Line between Knightsbridge and South Kensington Underground stations unearthed a pit so dense with human remains that it could not be tunnelled through. This is said to account for the curving nature of the track between the two stations."

A crowd-sourced (but double-checked, its creator told me) map of London's plague pits by the group Historic UK, later picked up by publications ranging from the Daily Mail to the Telegraph, mentions that a runaway lane for trains at Elephant & Castle junction is blocked off by a plague pit, while the Victoria Line drilled through a pit under Green Park.

"The Underground system passes through many burial grounds and plague pits," says Peter Ackroyd in his 2012 book, London Under.



The a Alamy Ait.

Many people believe that plague pits, like the one here, are scattered throughout London

Many people believe that communal plague pits, like the one illustrated here, are scattered throughout wider London (Credit: Alamy)

But did plague pits — or human burials at all — really affect the shape of London's underground lines?

As it turns out, probably not. But the truth, in some ways, is even stranger... and even more morbid.

When I asked London's transport historians about the plague pit-Tube connection, the overall response was a collective eye-roll. One after another told

me that, in all of their record-scouring of Underground history, they'd never come across any mentions of plague pits.

"In all of the work I have done and am doing I have never encountered anything that suggested real or imagined plague pits influenced the construction of the London Underground," Tube historian and author Mike Horne wrote in an e-mail.

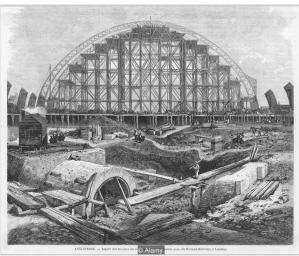
Author Scott Wood found the same. "Contacting the Transport for London Corporate Archives, I was told that there are no specific references to plague pits in their records," he wrote in his book London Urban Legends: The Corpse on the Tube and Other Stories. "I wanted to make sure — plague pits really are everywhere in London lore — so I went through the files on the planning and construction of the Victoria line and the Fleet line, which became the Jubilee line, under Green Park." Wood, like everyone else, turned up empty.

An 1868 illustration shows St Pancras station, then known as the terminus of the Midland Railway, taking shape near Euston Road (Credit: Alamy)

Not only that. Aside from one well-known example at St Pancras railway station in the 1860s, experts say they hadn't come across mentions of human remains — of any kind — in their research of the Underground's early years. "Never found dead bodies at all," says transport journalist and expert Christian Wolmar.

Experts were also quick to point out that we know why the subway lines curve, and it's not because of plague pits. It's because of cost.

The first routes, including the Circle, District and Metropolitan railways, were built using mainly 'cut and cover' construction. This meant digging a trench about 30ft wide by 20ft deep, bricking in walls and a roof, then shovelling everything over with about 6ft of topsoil. As a result, the railway companies had to purchase any



An 1868 illustration of St Pancras station, then the terminus of the Midland Railway



A 19th-century photograph shows an underground line being built using 'cut and cover'



1855 proposal for a railway under Oxford Street and Piccadilly (Credit: Credit: Alamy)

private property affected by construction. In 1860, for example, the Metropolitan Railway bought and demolished some 1.000 homes for the line from King's Cross to Farringdon.

A 19th-century photograph shows one of the underground lines being built using 'cut and cover' construction (Credit: Alamy)

Even when tunnelling was used more frequently — as it was later with the Central, Piccadilly, Bakerloo, Hammersmith & City and Northern lines people believed that building collapses could occur if a tunnel was dug underneath. So the law still required that the railway companies buy any property they passed under.

As a result, whenever they could, the companies dug under publicly-owned roads.

This 1855 proposal for a railway under Oxford Street and Piccadilly didn't go through, but the Central and Piccadilly lines would take a similar route 50 years on (Credit: Alamy)

It's easy to see just how much of the Tube is explained this way by looking at a geographically accurate map, which you can see here. Looking it as an overlay on Google Maps, like with this version, makes it easier to see the roads.

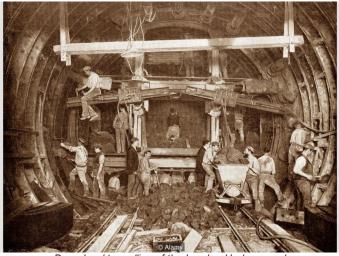
This alone deflates a lot of the anecdotes. That bit between South Kensington and Knightsbridge, for example, suddenly looks a lot less suspicious: it's following Brompton Road, not skirting resting places for plague victims.

Since most mentions of the Piccadilly Line-plague pit connection reference Catharine Arnold's book Necropolis, I asked her where she'd found it.

"It's anecdotal," she told me. "I got that from a then-boyfriend." She didn't know where he'd heard it from.

In any case, it would be strange for the Piccadilly Line to have to go around a plague pit, transport experts say. As one of the later railways, it was dug deeper than those earlier cut-and-cover lines, running between about 40 and 80ft below the surface. That's far below the level of any supposed plague burials.

Toward the 19th Century's end, the technology had developed for deep-level tunnelling, as shown by these Underground workers (Credit: Alamy)



Deep-level tunnelling of the London Underground

And even if there were burials near an underground line, it's unlikely that that would have affected their design, says David Long, author of London Underground: Architecture, Design and History.

"The notion of diverting a line because of that seems far-fetched," he says. "I think that it would just plow straight through it."

According to the story of the Green Park plague pit, that's what happened with the Victoria Line.

But when I searched through numerous newspaper articles written about the

route's construction in the 1960s, I couldn't find a single mention of human remains — despite how much such a story would have helped sell tabloids.

Later, in the Museum of Transport library, researcher Caroline Warhurst and I searched through books for any references at all.

We found nothing about plague pits.

There were a few mentions of Underground construction stumbling upon human remains, even if not plague victims, but they were nearly all found rather recently. In 1992, 160 skeletons, mainly of destitute women and babies, were removed from a crowded 19th-century burial ground at Redcross Way during tunnelling for the Jubilee Line extension. Two years later, 21 years of digging for the Jubilee's new Stratford depot wrapped up at the burial ground of the Abbey of St Mary's, Stratford Langthorne; 647 graves were excavated.



The Redcross Way burial ground, also known as the Crossbones Graveyard

Paddington to King's Cross hit remains in 1862:

A sign reminds visitors that what lies beyond is the Redcross Way burial ground, also known as the Crossbones graveyard (Credit: Alamy)

But what about the Underground's earlier days, over a full century earlier? There was only one tantalisingly short detail.

It turned up in Alan Jackson's London's Metropolitan Railway, a 328-page tome detailing seemingly every debate, cost and parliamentary bill regarding the Underground's genesis. But it only had this to say about when the line from

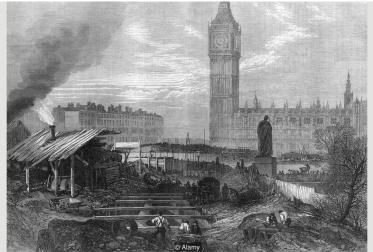
"Much of the excavation was made through the dust and debris of past ages, which in some places lay in a stratum up to 24ft deep. Human remains were encountered, payment being made to the London Necropolis Company for their removal and reburial at Brookwood, whither the bones of those who had never known railways travelled by train."

Scouring 19th-century newspapers led to more examples.

At a Commissioners of Sewers meeting in October 1865, the Standard reported, someone had written to the North London Railway "complaining of the manner in which certain human remains found in excavating the ground for one of their stations in the City... were alleged to have been treated."

The company secretary looked into it. He said that, yes, bones were found — and they were stuffed into one of the railway arches for safekeeping while the company decided what to do with them.

The commissioners' clerk had a suggestion for North London Railway as what to do with the bodies: he told them that recently, human remains had been found in West Street, Smithfield during the construction of a railway. He said that "they were carefully collected, put in coffins, and conveyed to the City of London Cemetery at Ilford."



Construction of the Underground at Westminster

Londoners complained that construction of the Underground at Westminster, as shown in this 1867 illustration, disturbed the abbey's burial ground (Credit: Alamy)

Even Westminster Abbey's burial ground was affected by the construction of a train line.

"Backed by an Act of Parliament, nothing may be considered safe, above ground or beneath, if a railway is required," wrote the Morning Post in September 1866. "A striking illustration of this fact is just now occurring before Westminster

Abbey, a portion of whose burial ground the new railway undermines. The passer by may notice that the whole northern side of the abbey churchyard is enclosed by a lofty hoarding, cutting off a large slice of the burial ground. Here the excavations for the new underground railway are in progress; and the human remains laid in consecrated earth, and vainly supposed to have been deposited till the day of doom, are being removed, coffined and uncoffined, to the necropolis at Woking — a more fitting and more safe final resting-place."

Yes, bones were found — and they were stuffed into one of the railway arches for safekeeping while the company decided what to do with them.

There were other hints that this wasn't an entirely infrequent occurrence — and that it was a trend that spanned a couple decades. In 1884, Isabella Gladstone for Pall Mall Gazette wrote that the railway companies "even endeavour to appropriate the square-gardens and the small burial-grounds (consecrated or unconsecrated) which they find conveniently situated for their purpose."

"There is scarcely a railway line which does not run over a few graveyards," she wrote.

Later, Roy Stephenson, the Museum of London's head of archaeology, mentioned to me that he'd recently come upon a memorial he'd never seen before: an unassuming monument tucked into a wall on Cloak Lane, an area near St Paul's Cathedral. The memorial simply reads: "Sacred to the memory of the dead interred in the ancient church & churchyard of St John the Baptist upon Walbrook during four centuries. The formation of the District Railway having necessitated the destruction of the greater part of the churchyard all the human remains contained therein were carefully collected and reinterred in a vault beneath this monument AD 1884."

This tucked-away memorial on Cloak Lane says that human remains, disturbed by the District line, were reburied here in 1884 (Credit: Wikimedia Commons)

Like many other churches in the City of London, St John the Baptist upon Walbrook burned down in the fire of 1666. Only its burial ground remained — until it was cut through by the District line.

I emailed Warhurst at the library. "We don't have a note of that memorial here, and it isn't mentioned in the relevant published histories covering that bit of the story," she wrote back. "We'll add that to our records."

Transport workers hitting human remains in London makes sense, given how many unmarked burials there are — even if such incidents only turn up rarely in historical accounts of the Underground being built.



Cloak Lane memorial

"Just about every green space you find in the city was probably a form of a burial ground," says Jay Carver, lead archaeologist for Crossrail, London's high-speed, deep-tunnel railway currently under construction. "A lot of those will still have human remains below ground. But they're not marked."

Some of that is from former burial grounds that lost their churches in the 1666 fire. More often, though, it's because of a law passed in 1852 to close the city's cemeteries.

By the early 19th Century, London's

churchyards were becoming too crowded; coffins sometimes jutted out of grounds and the air filled with a stench blamed for causing lethargy, fever, even cholera. Closed in the 1850s, many were re-landscaped and cleared of gravestones — but not always of human remains.



Bunhill Fields, an overcrowded cemetery, was later re-landscaped as a public space

One of London's many overcrowded cemeteries, Bunhill Fields — the resting place for some 120,000 individuals — was re-landscaped as a public space in the 1860s (Credit: Alamy)

But few if any of those burial grounds — and none that the railways seem to have hit — were 'plague pits'.

That's partly because plague pits themselves are rarer than people think. As long as land was available, plague victims were buried in cemeteries: usually in churchyards, along with those who died of other causes.

"The plague is a terrible experience for Londoners, so in some ways they cling on to things that they're used to, that give them stability and comfort," says University of London historian Vanessa Harding. "And one of those things is, as far as possible, people should be buried properly."



A contemporary engraving from the Great Plague of 1665

This contemporary engraving from the Great Plague of 1665 shows people fleeing London and corpses being taken away (Credit: Alamy)

But what of sites for only plague victims, ones outside a church's formal burial ground? Harding says there are "only a handful."

"People think that every time something is excavated and there are bodies, and they didn't know they were going to be there, it has to be a plague pit," she says. "The first point is that they were not scattered all over the greater London

area: as far as emergency plague burials in pits, it was quite closely around the City and West End. The second is that most of them were known where they were. There were contemporary records of them. I don't think that

there are a great many that nobody knew about."

Meanwhile, several of the most famous plague pits of lore, including those beneath Green Park and at Brompton Oratory, have no historical basis: aside from rumour, there's no evidence — archaeological or otherwise — that they ever existed.

It's unclear how, in the popular imagination, so many have passed from legend into fact. But Necropolis author Catharine Arnold's admission that she heard about the Piccadilly Line plague pit in passing might provide a clue. Once it's in print, a rumour becomes real: several other people I spoke with pointed me to her book as a source.

There is scarcely a railway line which does not run over a few graveyards

The legend has only grown. Even in June 2016, when a passenger captured a video of an "apparition" seen on the Piccadilly Line between Knightsbridge and South Kensington, the tabloid Express ran a story about how paranormal investigators thought it could be the "spirit of a victim of the Black Death." That was treated a little sceptically. But no such scepticism applied to the basis for the ghost story: that the tunnel curved around the Brompton Oratory plague pit at all. "Plague pits actually influenced the direction of many London Underground tunnels, carved out 150 years ago, with lines often having to curve around mass burial grounds such as this one," the story says confidently.

But the blame can't only be laid on contemporary writers. Some of the confusion also comes from reliance on writers of the time. Daniel Defoe's drama Journal of a Plague Year, for example, lists a number of plague pits. But Defoe was a child at the time of the 1665 event, and though he billed his book as being a victim's eyewitness account, it is now generally considered to be a work of historical fiction.



An 1830 engraving dramatises the 1665 epidemic

involved London's underground lines.

It was just much more recently than people think.

An 1830 engraving dramatises the 1665 epidemic, with bodies, including a mother with a baby on her chest, being brought out for collection (Credit: Alamy)

Carver pointed out how chroniclers of the Black Death of 1347-8 suggested that 50,000 plague victims were buried at Charterhouse Square. Two years ago, his team excavated there. "Clearly it's a massive exaggeration, from what we've seen," Carver says. "We're thinking more like 5,000."

But that's not to say plague burials never happened — or that they haven't ever

Because the high-speed Crossrail tunnel is so deep, it avoids most of London's archaeology. The exceptions are where the tunnel enters the ground, plus the shafts and the stations.

Crossrail archaeologist Carver says these exceptions added up to 40 spots in the city, all of which were investigated. Only two — Charterhouse Square in 2013 and, in 2015, Liverpool Street Station — turned up human remains.

Neither was a surprise. At Charterhouse Square, for example, labourers had turned up bones long before Crossrail's dig: during work on the sewage system in 1834 and again in 1861; when building a railway at West Smithfield in 1865 (presumably the incident in the Standard article which the commissioners' clerk referred to); and again in 1885.

Charterhouse Square seems like little more than a pretty park today, but even before Crossrail, labourers had dug up bones here on four different occasions (Credit: Alamy)



Charterhouse Square

"When it comes to human remains, it's illegal to disturb them... without a licence," Carver says. "So when it comes to burial grounds, the first thing you have to do, when planning a line like Crossrail, is plot all the burial grounds we know about, historically — and try and avoid them."

Still, he added, "It's a minor consideration in terms of building a railway like Crossrail, because the most important thing is accessibility. You can't put a station where no one wants one."

Planners for High Speed 2, another

high-speed rail network, are finding that now. Part of the project will include redevelopment of Euston Station, which calls for the excavation of St James's Gardens, an 18th-century cemetery-turned-park. "It's an important heritage site. It's a shame if the engineers can't come up with an alternative," Carver says. "But you can guarantee that if they decide it's the only option, it'll be because it is."

The benefit, meanwhile, is that the projects allow for rare archaeological excavations in the heart of the city.

Like the Charterhouse dig three years ago.

Finding plague victims there wasn't a surprise. By 1346, the Black Death had begun its sweep of Europe. Historical records show that the government of London, wanting to prepare, pre-emptively purchased and set aside land in the area to use for burial when it arrived. Two years later, it did, making the site one of the "handful" of purpose-built emergency burial sites that Harding and others referred to.

An extensive dig at East Smithfield in the 1980s excavated the remains of some 759 people — a fraction of the burial ground's estimated 2,400 Black Death victims. In 2011, DNA tests confirmed they had bubonic plague.

Just as interesting, though, was the care with which they were buried. Far from the idea of people being heaped in, the coffins were placed in neatly dug trenches, one some 410ft long.

So when the Crossrail team came to do a test excavation in 2013 a stone's throw away, at West Smithfield, they knew what they might expect: the other (and older) of the two emergency burial grounds records showed to be in the area.

And they were correct. Opening up a shaft just 18ft wide, they uncovered 25 skeletons. Testing a sample dated them to three different burial groups: 1348-9, 1360 and 1430. All three phases were confirmed to have samples of the bacteria that caused plague. Again, they were neatly buried.



Excavating a shaft just 18ft wide, Crossrail's archaeologists found 25 skeletons, later confirmed to be victims of the 1348 Black Death (Credit: Crossrail Ltd)

The Crossrail excavation was the first time that evidence of London's second emergency burial pit was firmly established. And — despite the rumours of them being located, helter-skelter, across the city — these are the only two purpose-built 'plague pits' from the Black Death of 1348 ever to have been confirmed.

Crossrail's archaeologists found 25 skeletons, victims of the 1348 Black Death

The Crossrail digging didn't stop there.

The second major Crossrail dig, for the ticket hall for Liverpool Street Station in summer 2015, has been tied to plague, too. But, for historians, in an even more exciting way.

That's because while both the Black Death of 1348 and Great Plague of 1665 were devastating — the Black Death is thought to have wiped out up to two-fifths of the London population, the Great Plague up to one-fifth — the Great Plague is the one that most people associate with chaos, terror and plague pits.



'Lord, have mercy on London', reads this English woodcut from the Great Plague separately, they were in a single mass grave.

'Lord, have mercy on London', reads this English woodcut from the Great Plague of 1665 (Credit: Alamy)

And yet those Great Plague pits remain elusive. In fact, no archaeological discovery of the 1665 epidemic's victims had been confirmed in London before.

Until Crossrail's dig in 2015. Some 3,500 skeletons were unearthed at the site of the Bedlam cemetery, a 16th- and 17th-century burial ground now under Liverpool Street. About 42 of the individuals, though, were different from the rest. Rather than having been buried

Still, as with the Smithfield dead, they'd been buried in coffins and rows — even if the coffins having rotted over time made them now look like they'd been heaped together.

But they were stacked up to four deep, without any soil between them. In other words, they weren't grotesquely thrown in... but they were buried in haste, and likely on the same day.



The skeletons excavated for the Liverpool Street Station ticket hall

The skeletons excavated for the Liverpool Street Station ticket hall are the only 1665 plague victims to be confirmed with DNA in the UK (Credit: Crossrail Ltd)

This week, the DNA test results from the 'plague pit' burials at the coming Crossrail line (and near where the Central, Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan lines converge on Liverpool Street) were announced. They were positive for the bacteria that causes bubonic plague.

That makes those skeletons the only

plague victims from the 1665 epidemic to be confirmed with DNA in the whole of the UK.

"Part of the payback for the fact that we couldn't avoid it is we do get really important research," Carver says. "It's the first archaeological sample of any burial ground in the city of this date."

In both cases, when they began digging, Crossrail was well aware of what they would find — and were able to excavate accordingly.

But that hasn't always been the case.

When I asked archaeologists at the Museum of London about times when London's transport construction hit — or avoided — human remains in London, they paused.

"The Eurostar extension," blurted out Jelena Bekvalac, the museum's curator of human osteology. "Oh," groaned the two others, Roy Stephenson and Rebecca Redfern, in unison. "That was ghastly!"

In 2002, plans were underway to extend and renovate St Pancras station, including building a new terminal that could accommodate the new, 1300ft-long trains that would speed through the Channel Tunnel. The work would cut into the cemetery of St Pancras Old Church, just to the north of the station, affecting some 40,000 square feet of burial ground.

"So traumatising," said Stephenson, who had been one of the archaeologists at the excavation. "It started off well. You had osteologists on site. But it basically took too long, so they invoked the full tenant of the act [of Parliament, which was required to build] and removed the human remains in a more — mechanical fashion."

Mechanical fashion? "Yeah. I think there was a conveyor belt involved."

"There was. And one of those pile drivers that you dig down, and just digs through coffins and plates and people," Bekvalac said.

The archaeologists had been under (now expired) confidentiality agreements, so only a couple of stories — including one in the Evening Standard and one on the BBC — seem to have made it to press, along with an official (and seemingly anaesthetised) book about the excavation.



The new St Pancras International station

Construction of the new St Pancras International station, which opened in 2007, required cutting into some 40,000 feet of nearby burial ground (Credit: Alamy)

Meanwhile, according to the BBC, the company had been able to avoid the "normal special permission required when building work disturbs a cemetery."

The burial grounds of St Pancras Old Church had been disturbed before. Just a decade after the cemetery's 1854 closure, the Midland Railway cut across them. At the time, this caused a great

deal of controversy — making it the only example of human remains being moved for London's railways that most historians I spoke with had heard of. Like many other London cemeteries, the cemetery was infamously overstuffed. The work was messy, done at night, involving hacking through coffins with spade and pickaxe.

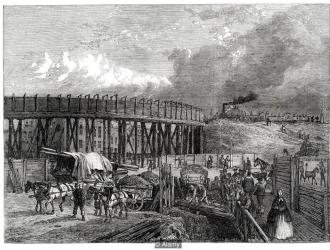
One of those watching was the writer Thomas Hardy, who worked as an overseer for the Clerk of Works. He wrote a poem inspired by the scene which memorably began: "We late-lamented, resting here, Are mixed to human jam, And each to each exclaims in fear, 'I know not which I am!"

This 1867 illustration shows the Midland Railway being built across the St Pancras Old Church burial ground (Credit: Alamy)

An estimated total of 7,403 bodies were exhumed at the time.

Which meant that, when the St Pancras project began in 2002, those involved thought the burials had already been cleared.

"People assumed that it had already been destroyed, and when it came to construction, it wasn't. So it was catch-up to get the archaeological team in place," says Carver, who was also one of the archaeologists on the site. "It was a lot of frantic negotiation — with a lack of time to do it."



The Midland Railway being built across the St Pancras Old Church burial ground

We late-lamented, resting here, Are mixed to human jam, And each to each exclaims in fear, 'I know not which I am!'

At one point, to speed everything up, archaeological excavation of the site was halted completely while machines dug through the soil.

That event is part of why, Carver said, he never makes assumptions.

On a recent afternoon, I walked past the gleaming glass-and-iron leviathan of St Pancras International terminal. About 300 yards up the road from the bustle of

people and traffic was a small green hillock, walled in from the street, its ground starting some 3 or 4ft above the street level. But it wasn't a natural hill; its height was from the number of people buried there.



St Pancras Old Church as it is now

St Pancras Old Church as it is now, just around the corner from St Pancras station (Credit: Alamy)

This, of course, was St Pancras Old Church. To the naked eye, its burial grounds appear like any other. Old tombstones dot the grass; trees arch into the sky.

But it's not. Tombstones cluster at the base of an ash tree: they were among those moved during the Midland Railway's construction, memorialised with the planting of the tree — now known as the 'Hardy Tree'. In a nearby

corner, 31 tombs are lined up in a row, seemingly moved from their original spot. Next to them are 16 rows of flat grave slabs, grown over with weeds, inscriptions mostly illegible. Brick walls cut off the grounds at clinical angles. Just beyond, railway tracks start their run to Europe.



Tombstones moved during the construction of the railway (Credit: Credit: Alamy) minutes, a train rattles past, drowning out the silence.

In the end, the popular urban legend doesn't hold up. The people who were buried here didn't die of plague — though many likely died of other scourges like cholera, or smallpox. And their burial didn't alter the shape of London's railway lines.

But they might have found the truth — that their bones would be moved in the great, and ongoing, construction of London's elaborate transport networks — even stranger.

And those who remain in their original resting place don't hear how, every few

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Strangers in our skies

ntnews.com.au



Mike Mewett wants to know what killed his trees in Humpty Doo. PICTURE: Elise Derwin Northern Territory

Humpty Doo gardener baffled after forces from above kill trees

JILL POULSEN, NT News July 9, 2016 8:21pm

A BAFFLING case of dying foliage has a Humpty Doo man questioning what's been lurking in the skies over his 2ha rural property.

It was just under a week ago when Mike Mewett first noticed patches of leaves on trees on a roughly 100m section of the property were dropping.

"It's so strange, it's not the tree that's dying, it's like there's something been dropped on it from above," he said.

"To me that's the only logical explanation, unless we've got aliens around here."

The *NT News* visited Mr Mewett's property and witnessed the triangular shaped section of trees where parts of a tree's branch had completely died while other leaves on the branch flourished.

Mr Mewett, an avid gardener, said he'd never encountered anything like it.

"We sometimes see a light aircraft flying in the area ... maybe it dumped some fuel," he said.

Mr Mewett's Humpty Doo Property is less than a kilometre from where Brisbane UFO hunter Erik Black spotted a "thing" floating above his head in 2010.

Mr Black described the UFO as "shaped like a hamburger, with black dots" and "weird-looking headlights".

Several recent sightings of similar, round orbs hovering silently above Humpty Doo have also been reported to the *NT News*.

A local arborist saidthat without inspecting the damage on Mr Mewett's property, it was hard to say what the cause was, but said it definitely didn't sound like a virus.

"Sometimes lightning strikes can cause damage like that but if it spans 100m it wouldn't be a lightning strike, plus we haven't had any lightening," he said.

"It could be a reaction to a chemical ... it certainly does sound strange."

The rural area is also known for it's Yowie activity, but a local Yowie expert, who asked not to be named, said there was "no way" the damage on Mr Mewett's property could be put down to those creatures.

"It's far more likely to be a UFO than a Yowie," he said.

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Police solve mystery of two severed fingers found in Red River park

twincities.com

By Forum News Service

PUBLISHED: August 25, 2016 at 5:50 pm | UPDATED: August 25, 2016 at 6:29 pm

EAST GRAND FORKS, Minn. — The mystery that surrounded the discovery of two severed fingers in an East Grand Forks park appears to have been solved.

Police have DNA results linking a 24-year-old local man to the fingers, which were found in May on a picnic table at a Red River State Recreation Area campsite, according to a news release.

The digits came from a Grand Forks, N.D., man who was involved in a fireworks accident in downtown Grand Forks about a month earlier, East Grand Forks police Lt. Rodney Hajicek said in the release Thursday.

"We're satisfied with the conclusion of it," East Grand Forks police detective Tony Hart said. "It wasn't ... the result of an act of violence."

The accident victim, identified in a police report as 24-year-old Mackenzie Steele, attempted to light the fuse of a 2-inch mortar round and place it inside a launch tube in the early hours of April 30 in downtown Grand Forks. He then held "onto the base of the launch tube after deliberately igniting the fuse," police said in the report. Steele set the tube down and held onto it to prevent it from falling, but the firework exploded, causing the tube to explode into small fragments of shrapnel, the report stated.

The shrapnel severely injured Steele's hand, resulting in the complete or partial loss of his left palm, wrist and fingers, including his ring and middle fingers.

North Dakota court records indicate he was not charged with any fireworks violations.

Several weeks later, Melissa and Monty Atkinson told the Grand Forks Herald they were setting up camp at the Red River State Recreation Area in East Grand Forks when their 6-year-old child found two fingers on a picnic table.

The Minnesota state crime lab determined they were a middle and ring finger from a left hand attached by skin from a palm.

"At the time it was reported, we had a lot of theories, but it turned out to be just the result of an accident," Hart said.

Hajicek speculated the fingers may have belonged to the man involved in the fireworks accident.

It is unknown how the fingers ended up on the East Grand Forks side of the Red River, but the crime lab noted possible beak marks in the flesh, Hart said.

"The theory is a bird found them and took them over here," he said.

The lesson from the incident is that fireworks are dangerous and should be handled properly and with care, Grand Forks police Lt. Derik Zimmel said.

As for the mystery being solved, "it's always good to finally have an answer," he said.

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Murder suspect found biting off victim's face, Florida deputies say



TEQUESTA, Fla. - A college student accused of fatally stabbing a married couple after deputies found him biting a man's face during an attack late Snyder said the suspect, identified by authorities as Austin Harrouff, 19, might have been on drugs when he attacked a couple in their home, as we Martin County Sheriff's Office deputies said they found Harrouff on top of the dead husband, biting and removing pieces of his face.

The first deputy who arrived tried to stop Harrouff with a Taser, but the stun gun didn't stop him, Snyder said. More deputies were called and eventually overpowered Harrouff

Snyder said Harrouff had "super-human" strength and was making "animal-like sounds" at the hospital.

The neighbor who tried to help the couple was taken to a hospital for treatment.

The neighbor's father said his son, Jeff Fisher, 47, was walking his dog when he heard a commotion in the couple's garage and confronted the culprit.

"He was (lying) on the floor, bleeding pretty badly," Steve Fisher said of his son.

Jeff Fisher was taken to St. Mary's Medical Center in West Palm Beach.

The man whose face was bitten died at the scene.

Deputies also found a woman's body inside the garage of the home. Former North Miami Beach Mayor Jeff Mischon said the victim was his daughter, Michelle Stevens.

Stevens was a 1981 graduate of North Miami Beach Senior High School. Her husband, Jeff Stevens, graduated from Miami Killian Senior High School.

Snyder said it appeared to be a "completely unprovoked and random attack."

Harrouff, a Florida State University student, was in town with his fraternity brothers and lived with his mother a few blocks away, Snyder said.

"He doesn't have a past (criminal history)," Snyder said.

Snyder said Harrouff was at a Duffy's restaurant in Jupiter with his parents earlier Monday evening when he became agitated and walked away.

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88 Comments

5 hours ago

Marion Tinsley

Looks like Austin has been smoking bath salts. They should have pumped him full of lead and saved everyone a lot of time and money.

8 hours ago

Vidkun Lauritz Jonssøn

Austin Harrouff should receive a fair, speedy trial and then be immediately executed.

8 hours ago

Rick Nolte

Has Trump made a statement?

Will Trump be banning college age students from entering the country?

Will Trump be applying "extreme vetting" as part of college admissions?

We should shut down all universities with a student body that is known to be aggressive and deport the students

The wingers want this guy to be able to concealed carry on campus! Just swell....

7 hours ago

Charles Anthony

Bizarre post.

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Joe Schmoe

Will shark jumping simpering chicken necks be immediately talking about Trump?

7 hours ago

WhatsUpInTheSky

You sound obsessed with the Don.. I hope the Fed are watching you.

6 hours ago

Kristi Dariano

take your meds Rick

6 hours ago

Kay Ferguson

Another Trump bashing, lowlife, sheeple sucker

8 hours ago

obamasuxs

This is why elderly people need to arm themselves, buy a gun, learn to use it and practice.

8 hours ago

John Oakman

Dollar to a donut: He's a Registered Dimorat.

9 hours ago

Steve Hollar

Might have been on drugs???

9 hours ago

anthony dagostino

Oh my god, time we ban teeth in young people. Too many young kids have access to teeth, some have a gross number of them, ranging from the high twenties, even as high

It's just a shame that so many conservative republicans like getting their teeth cleaned, so they can show them menacingly to the public with every evil smile, they are heartle

Thankfully, poor people have seen the dangers of teeth, and choose to allow their teeth to rot and fall out, matter of fact, halitosis is a sign and docility. So the stinkier the brea 9 hours ago

The Guy Who

Folks, please keep in mind someone may have "dosed" this kid. I mean

think about it, who goes out to dinner with parents on a visit and decides

"I think I'll do some bath salts now". Just sayin', very strange for a kid with

no past of criminal behavior.

9 hours ago

Michael France

I agree with Obama that we should let drug dealers out of prison early

Oh wait...

9 hours ago

David Shaw

People who think drugs are harmless should read this story.

10 hours ago

Fred Doe

Oh he had taken drugs! That makes everything different! Let the poor boy go and prosecute the company that made the drugs!

That was Sarcasm, for you liberal idiots who actually agreed with it.

10 hours ago

Charlene Peters

He Is a Member of the Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity.

http://heavy.com/news/2016/08/austin-harrouff-flakka-murder-florida-john-joseph-stevens-michelle-karen-mishcon-murder-facebook-page/

Not black...

Not Middle Fastern

Just a dumarse rich PUNK who thought booze and drugs make a good combo.

Cops should have double tapped him. Saved everyone a lot of time and money.

10 hours ago

Charlene Peters

I didn't need to open this to know it was Florida

11 hours ago

Bob She

Fla. 11 hours ago

Paul Roberts

Murder suspect - Seen biting off skin removing it from the victims face.

I would have shot the M.F. where he stood. At that point he is guilty of the crime, caught in the act and not alleged, not a suspect.

11 hours ago

lambcPentamastr

Pass the bath salts, please.

11 hours ago

Ratpiler

Must have been a typical democrat looking for BRAINS he didnt get at birth!

12 hours ago

Liberty First

Synthetic marijuana zombie killer.

Anybody caught producing synthetic marijuana should be summarily executed.

12 hours ago

Harry Seaward

Had to click to see if it was Germany or Florida.

Meme still kickin.

12 hours ago

Kingsley Baconhausen

Same!

12 hours ago

Ray Dunnigun

same here, just where in FL was the only question in my mind.

12 hours ago

Wy Bok

Bath Salts..

12 hours ago

Ray Dunnigun

FLOCKA song on his FB page

https://www.facebook.com/music/simple_play?

11 hours ago

Liberty First

Bingo!

12 hours ago

George Peters

So police will shoot and kill someone for talking back to them during a traffic stop....but only taser a guy laying on a dead body, chewing off his face?? This sounds like one of

12 hours ago

John Busciglio

that is exactly what I was thinking

11 hours ago

Matthew Marcinik

that was my first thought. talking back, driving, complying with an order while black and get shot. chewing on someones face? meh call for backup.... had to be a white guy

11 hours ago

James Weir

actually your take on this is wrong. the martin county sheriff, unlike the palm beach county sheriff, values citizens' lives. early in his term he dealt with a guy with a gun barric (edited)10 hours ago

Charlene Peters

No, they don't shoot someone for talking back to them. That's ANOTHER lie the radical lefties have brainwashed the mindless with. Why oh WHY MY GOD do these people

9 hours ago Fred Doe

No, it sounds like the crazy world we actually live in. 12 hours ago

Christopher Snittle

Demon possession?

12 hours ago

Ron Desrosier

Here's his facebook page. He looked relatively normal, it must have been drugs. https://www.facebook.com/austin.harrouff?fref=ts

12 hours ago

Cam Kirmser

The guy should've been popped at the scene so that taxpayers would be saved the cost of a trial and likely psychiatric care.

13 hours ago

Anonymous

There's a picture of the POS here... http://www.wptv.com/news/police-investigating-double-fatal-stabbing-in-tequesta Looks like a stereotypical coddled millennial from suburb innocent. It's a sad day to be called American.

11 hours ago

Liberty First

Um, you left out the BURNING AND LOOTING in Milwaukee and the 100 SHOT in Chicago last weekend. This zombie killer is bad, but there are many more reasons to be s (edited)10 hours ago

Charlene Peters

A sad day to be called an American?

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F-22 Raptor Grounded By Swarm

By Tyler Rogoway August 11, 2016 August 11, 2016

thedrive.com

Undoubtedly the swarm's victory tasted sweet.



In June, one of the most capable air-to-air fighters in the world, an F-22 Raptor based at Langley AFB, was grounded by a swarm of honey bees. The bees were drawn to the Raptor's thrust-vectoring exhaust nozzles, covering a good portion of the upper left-hand petal.

By Tyler RogowayPosted in The War Zone

The 192nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron called in retired Navy

veteran and local bee keeper Andy Westrich to relocate the honey bees to a more acceptable home. He donned his gear and vacuumed the bees right up, solving the problem for all involved, including the bees.

Now just watch out for those Super Hornets!



USAF

Honey bees commandeer one of an F-22's exhaust petals.

USAF

Navy veteran and pro bee keeper Andy Westrich removes bees from a F-22.

USAF

Navy veteran and pro bee keeper Andy Westrich removes bees from a F-22.

Lt. Col. Catherine Jumper, 192nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron commander, presents Andy Westrich with a coin for his work freeing the Raptor of its bee infestation.

H/T to Alert5.

Contact the author Tyler@thedrive.com

Your Email Address

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THE WARZONEWIRE

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The May 1967 Great Storm and Radio Disruption Event:

Extreme Space Weather and Extraordinary Responses

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This article has been accepted for publication and undergone full peer review but has not been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process which may lead to differences between this version and the Version of Record. Please cite this article as doi: 10.1002/2016SW001423

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Abstract: Although listed as one of the most significant events of the last 80 years, the space weather storm of late May 1967 has been of mostly fading academic interest. The storm made its initial mark with a colossal solar radio burst causing radio interference at frequencies between 0.01-9.0 GHz and near-simultaneous disruptions of dayside radio communication by intense fluxes of ionizing solar X-rays. Aspects of military control and communication were immediately challenged. Within hours a solar energetic particle event disrupted high frequency communication in the polar cap. Subsequently record-setting geomagnetic and ionospheric storms compounded the disruptions. We explain how the May 1967 storm was nearly one with ultimate societal impact, were it not for the nascent efforts of the United States Air Force in expanding its terrestrial weather monitoring-analysis-warning-prediction efforts into the realm of space weather forecasting. An important and long-lasting outcome of this storm was more formal Department of Defense support for current-day space weather forecasting. This story develops during the rapid rise of solar cycle 20 and the intense Cold War in the latter half of the 20th Century. We detail the events of late May 1967 in the intersecting categories of solar-terrestrial interactions and the political-military backdrop of the Cold War. This was one of the "Great Storms" of the 20th century, despite the lack of large geomagnetically-induced currents. Radio disruptions like those discussed here warrant the attention of today's radio-reliant, cellular-phone and satellite-navigation enabled world.

ACC

Key Points:

- The 23-27 May 1967 event was a "Great" solar and geospace storm
- First Air Force Solar Forecasting Unit partially mitigated the impacts of extreme solar
 radio bursts on US military
- The storm led to military recognition of space environment effects as an operational concern and helped establish a forecasting system

1. Introduction

1.1 Intersection of Nature and Politics

In late May 1967 during the rapid rise of solar cycle 20 one of the most active regions of the decade, McMath Region 8818, rotated onto the Earth-facing solar disk during Carrington Rotation 1521. Figures 1a-c provide Environmental Science Services Administration (ESSA) details of the event, along with Hydrogen-alpha (H-α) images of the 23 May 23 1967 flares from Sacramento Peak Observatory operated by the United States Air Force (USAF). Solar radio bursts (SRBs) and plasma eruptions from the region filled the interplanetary regime. Radio technologies of the day were severely tested. The quote (below) from a presentation by *Citrone* [1995] addresses the roles of two USAF agencies--Air Weather Service (AWS) and North American Air Defense (NORAD) Command in responding to the event-and provides insight into the gravity of the situation faced by Department of Defense (DoD) during these disturbances:

"Probably the first significant operational impact came from a major solar flare and the resultant geomagnetic storm in May, 1967. AWS notified NORAD in real-time of the event and

the associated mission impacts. However, outside agencies were not aware of the space environmental factors and made uninformed decisions without considering the drastic impacts the

event imparted to NORAD's early warning systems, which have a direct bearing on decisions being made at the highest levels of the US government. As a result of this near-incident, the need

to incorporate real-time space weather information into the Air Force decision-making

process

was made obvious to many, and several major efforts were undertaken to greatly improve the operational capability of the AWS Space Environmental Support System."

This quote, which originates in unclassified AWS documents from the early 1980's [Department of the Air Force, 1980 and Townsend et al., 1982], delicately sidesteps the circumstances of the situation that clearly involved an uneven response to a solar-geophysical storm.

Compared to the relative quiet of the first part of the month, major solar storms and attendant radio emissions developed on 21 May and continued through 28 May 1967. One of the largest geomagnetic storms on record began on 25 May. These geophysical conditions were intertwined with other factors that required vigilance on the part of the US military. Cold War tensions were playing out in in May 1967 with high-stakes developments in the Vietnamese demilitarized zone and the escalation to the June 1967 war in the Middle East [e.g., *US Department of State*, 2009a and b and *History.com*]. We shed light on how the largest recorded solar radio burst of the 20th Century, on 23 May 1967, was a near trip-wire in the tense political and military landscape of the time.

1.2 Cold War and Military Background

We provide a brief overview of the roles of USAF commands and agencies involved in the May 1967 near incident. The intense May 1967 solar activity, which we describe in Section 2, took place against a backdrop of the ongoing Cold War marked by the extraordinary buildup of nuclear weapons as part of the doctrine of mutually assured destruction. Tensions between the Eastern and Western blocs of nations played out in direct interactions between super powers and as activities in distant lands where surrogate politics could easily

produce flashovers.

The USAF had a primary role in maintaining the delicate balance of nuclear threat for the Western bloc [Winkler and Webster, 1997]. Two key players were: The USAF Strategic Air Command (SAC) and the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD), which later replaced "Air" with "Aerospace". After World War II SAC was established with a mission of conducting worldwide long-range offensive operations, first conventional and then nuclear [Strategic Air Command, 1991]. From the early 1960's to 1990 SAC maintained an aerial command post and a constant in-air presence. During the peak of the Cold War one third of the entire bomber force was on alert at any given time [DeBerry et al., 1997].

SAC developed an Alert Force Concept and exercised it often [Narducci, 1988]. For the aerial fleet these were multi-minute scrambles to prepare bomber aircraft for launch in the shortest possible time [e.g. Introduction in Kelley, 2016]. As noted on one web site dedicated to SAC history (http://www.lincolnafb.org/): "To keep airmen trained and ready for alerts, SAC headquarters often dispatched alert exercise messages to its bases. These exercises ranged from Alpha, Bravo, Coco and Delta. Alpha exercises included the crews scrambling to their plane, while Bravo included the start up of the aircraft. Coco exercises involved the aircraft taxiing to the runway and readying for takeoff before the exercise would be called off. These alerts were quite rare, but Delta exercises were the rarest as they sent the aircraft into the air." Radio communications for command and control of the Alert Forces were crucial if aircraft took to the air. SAC's primary communication system, GIANT TALK relied on the HF 6-30 MHz band, with supplemental communications at higher frequencies.

Air defense was entrusted to a different entity. In late 1957, Canada and the US agreed to create the bi-national North American Air Defense Command to centralize operational control of North American continental air defenses against the threat of Soviet bombers. NORAD was headquartered in Colorado Springs, CO, USA. During the early 1960's

NORAD began operating the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS), designed to track space objects and detect incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) [Schaffel, 1990]. Three high-latitude BMEWS radar sites, operating at 440 MHz, monitored the polar skies and provided ~15-minute warnings to the US, Canada and the United Kingdom [Stone and Banner, 2000]. On 15 May 1967 NORAD accepted as 'fully operational' a major upgrade to the BMEWS system [Del Papa and Warner, 1987]. NORAD and SAC operations were inextricably linked as they shared early warning data, however decisions related to the data could result in independent actions.

In 1948 Dr. Donald Menzel, a Harvard University astronomer, laid the groundwork for AF solar observatories in an attempt to continue radio propagation studies for the military in the post World War II era [Liebowitz, 2002]. After the launch of Sputnik-1 the USAF Air Weather Service (AWS), which provided meteorological support for USAF and Army operations, extended its efforts into solar and geophysical forecasting by sending a few weather officers (three in the first round) to obtain advanced degrees in related areas. These officers provided the technical leadership for the AWS Solar Observing and Forecasting Network (SOFNET), a network tasked to support NORAD and its radars, some of which experienced solar and auroral interference. Under the guidance of USAF Major Roger Olson solar prediction "tests" began in late 1962 at Headquarters (HQ) AWS, followed with regular predictions from a facility at Ent AFB in Colorado Springs, CO, USA in the latter half of 1964 [Markus et al., 1987]. By September 1965 several solar observatories were providing data to the AWS Fourth Weather Wing (4WW) via SOFNET. In May 1967 four solar observatories in the US, as well as observatories in Greece and the Philippines, were hosting AWS and Air Force Cambridge Research Laboratory (AFCRL) solar observers, some of whom augmented local civilian observing staff [Anderson, 1969].

To ingest SOFNET data and disseminate related information, the 4WW Solar Fore-

cast Center began operations with one forecaster and one observer in the autumn of 1965 at Ent AFB. Shortly thereafter the Center, also known as Detachment 7, Operating Location 10 (DET 7 OL-10), expanded and moved to the NORAD Cheyenne Mountain Complex (NCMC) in Colorado to be co-located with decision makers. This also marked the beginning of 24-hour-a-day DoD space weather operations. On 1 April 1966 the 4WW issued its first forecasting manual: Fourth Weather Wing Manual 105-1, Forecasting Solar Activity and Geophysical Response (4WWM 105-1, 1966), authored by Colonel Charles (C.K.) Anderson, Commander of DET 7, 4WW, and his Scientific Services Officer, Capt. Allan Ramsay. By May 1967 Detachment 7 established a forecast routine with a primary forecast at 21 UT and three supplementary forecasts at 03, 09 and 15 UT. An extended forecast was issued weekly. Routine briefings were provided to NORAD. Thus, by the time of the May 1967 storms there was an established methodology for communicating space environment concerns to NORAD. Simultaneously AF (and SAC) interest in ionospheric forecasting was on the rise. Test ionospheric forecasts began in late 1966, with full time ionospheric forecasting underway at NCMC in late 1968. The interval between the ionospheric test forecasts and a fully functioning ionospheric forecasting effort is of significant interest because it bracketed the great solar and geomagnetic storms of late May 1967.

Civilian interest in solar and geophysical activity was also increasing as the nation geared up for human spaceflight missions and an eventual trip to the moon. To better characterize and predict hazardous space environmental conditions in support of NASA, ESSA's Space Disturbances Laboratory (SDL) was created from the former Central Radio Propagation Laboratory in 1965 [Olsen, 1969]. The latter organization leveraged observations from the University of Colorado's High Altitude Observatory to provide "radio weather" forecasts for a broad community of users in the WWII and post-WWII era. SDL operated the Space Disturbances Forecast Center (SFDC), which is now the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration (NOAA) US Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC). ESSA also exercised administrative oversight of the Aeronomy and Space Data Center (now the Solar Terrestrial Physics (STP) unit of the US National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI). Much of the supporting information for this manuscript is derived from ESSA's Upper Atmosphere Geophysics Report-5 (UAG-5) [*Lincoln*, 1969] and Solar-Geophysical Data, IER-FB-274 and IER-FB-275, ESSA [1967].

1.3 A Brief Guide to Solar and Geomagnetic Disturbances with Emphasis on Radio Effects

To assist those readers unfamiliar with the myriad of space weather radio effects we provide a short guide to sources and timing of radio disturbances and a schematic of these in Fig. 2. The most geoeffective space weather storms often arise from multiple solar emissions in or above sunspots threaded by strong, twisted magnetic field. These regions, formerly called plage regions, are now called Active Regions (AR). When energy density in AR magnetic fields reaches a tipping point the fields reconfigure, producing bursts of electromagnetic energy (flares) across a broad spectrum of wavelengths: X-ray, Extreme Ultraviolet (EUV), UV, visible, and radio emissions. Some very strong flares produce gamma ray and intense white-light emissions. All electromagnetic emissions, which travel at light speed, reach Earth in roughly eight minutes. Solar radio bursts (SRBs), can cause immediate radio frequency interference (RFI) in systems that receive and/or process radio signals, Radars and Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), of which the US Global Positioning System (GPS) is an example, are two types of impacted systems. (See Fig. 8 of Nita et al. [2002] for a schematic of a typical solar radio burst spectrum.) Additionally, flare X-ray and EUV emissions interact with Earth's upper atmosphere and change ionization levels, altering the upper atmosphere's ability to propagate radio signals, and often producing high-frequency (HF) signal absorption (see *Thomson et al.* [2005]). These effects fall under the general category of Sudden Ionospheric Disturbances (SIDs). RFIs and SIDs are considered prompt flare effects.

Often, an additional consequence of solar magnetic field reconfiguration is the eruption of a coronal mass ejection (CME)--a magnetized cloud of plasma rising out of or near the flare site. Although CMEs and flares can develop independently of each other, the largest solar flares are almost always accompanied by fast CMEs that propagate outward at supersonic speeds. As CMEs traverse the outer solar atmosphere they disturb the plasma in the solar atmosphere creating a new set of radio signals (noise) that extend the noise from the original burst disturbance. CMEs, though traveling at supersonic speeds in the solar atmosphere and in the interplanetary medium, are the 'slow movers' in the chain of disturbances that arrive at Earth's orbit. The fastest CMEs arrive at Earth in about a day, however two to four days is more typical. When these magnetized plasma clouds pass Earth, sometimes causing Sudden Storm Commencements (SSCs), their interactions with Earth's magnetic field can cause geomagnetic disturbances and intensify ionospheric storms. In turn these storms can disrupt radio communication on a regional basis. CME arrival may also generate magnetospheric compression events, promote geomagnetically-induced currents (GICs) at the ground, and enhance currents and fluxes of energized particles that threaten satellites with solar wind particles and particles from the radiation belt. Radio noise from CMEs can be present for tens of hours. Geomagnetic effects of CMEs are generally long-delay effects

Flares and CMEs can generate another form of space weather disturbance called solar energetic particle events. These are comprised of highly accelerated electrons and protons energized at the flare site or at the leading edge of fast CMEs. Because protons are the primary momentum carriers the associated disturbances are usually called solar proton events (SPEs) events. High energy SPEs can reach Earth in twenty minutes to a few hours after the particles are accelerated. The broad shocks ahead of fast CME's continually energize such

particles creating long lasting (gradual) SPEs that are called radiation storms. Radiation storms can damage satellites, harm astronauts, and cause long-lived HF radio communication disruptions due to signal absorption in the polar regions called Polar Cap Absorption (PCA) events. These are short-delay effects.

Each of these events create in their own way different radio disturbances, first by noise from the SRBs, and by effects of X-ray and EUV in the lower and upper ionosphere, respectively (mostly on a global scale on the dayside), then by deep ionospheric ionization from the energetic protons at high latitudes in both hemispheres, causing HF radio absorption. Lastly, with Earth-arrival of the CME, magnetospheric and ionospheric storms cause other types of radio disturbances, primarily from dusk to dawn in the near-equatorial latitudes and on Earth's nightside near the auroral zones. Electric fields can promptly penetrate to low latitudes causing otherwise marginally stable layers of the ionosphere to overturn creating equatorial plasma bubbles that scintillate radio signals. On slightly longer time scales energy from the magnetosphere cascades to Earth's upper atmosphere where it can cause compositional changes, ionospheric patches and perturbations, enhanced satellite drag, and aurora. There is growing evidence that the largest high-latitude auroral disturbances can produce waves in Earth's atmosphere that propagate to low latitudes, giving rise to additional disturbances in the form of radio signal scintillation near the magnetic equator. Scintillations affect mainly affect current day GNSS and satellite communication.

Briefly, solar eruptions give rise to a chain of events whose effects-window can extend from just over eight minutes to several days (or longer if Earth's inner radiation belts are disturbed). Radio technologies are unique in that they can suffer disruptions from every aspect of a solar space weather disturbance, and even from atmospheric effects that are quite secondary. In many cases radio disruption is from only one storm source, but during extreme events all sources may contribute. The effects tend to be frequency- and system-dependent,

making them very challenging to diagnose and predict. For additional discussion of and references for these topics see *Lang* [2009] and *Baker and Lanzerotti* [2016].

2. May 1967 Solar-Geophysical Background and Details—what we know now

Here we present the solar-geophysical "backstory" for May 1967 derived from publications spanning four decades and from the recollections of those involved in the actual event and post-event analyses. Figure 3 gives a temporal reference for the SRBs, flares, SPEs and suddencommencement (SC) events. We provide details of the solar bursts because they were at the heart of the situation. We also provide a general discussion of the geospace response and tabulate the details in a table for quick reference.

2.1 The Solar Backstory: Rising Solar Activity in McMath Region 8818, May 21-31 1967

McMath Plage Region 8818 (Fig. 4) appeared at the east solar limb on 17 May, passed disk center on 25 May, and rotated off the western limb on 31 May. It produced 76 flares of importance ≥ 1 (coverage ≥ 100 millionths of solar disk area) during its Earth-facing passage [Lindgren, 1968]. The 18 May 1967 ESSA H-α Synoptic Chart notes (Fig. 1) report an "East limb passage of the one of the greatest activity complexes of Solar Cycle 20." The plage region first showed itself to be hyperactive late on 21 May. On 21, 23 and 28 May the region produced great radio bursts [Castelli and Barrons, 1977]. The 21 May event included a white light flare at solar coordinates N24°, E39°, along with soft and hard X-ray emissions, in addition to Type II, III, IV and V dynamic radio spectra and 2.8 GHz and 600 MHz radio emissions [see data listings and plots in Arnoldy et al., 1969; Kane and Winckler, 1969a; and Dodson et al., 1975]. Subsequently Pioneer 7, located at 1.06 AU with an Earth-Sun-

spacecraft angle of -36.5° (and thus magnetically well-connected to the plage region at E39°), recorded an increase in energetic proton flux with energies above 73 MeV [Simpson and Fan, 1973].

During the next two days complexity and magnetic gradients in the region increased. The ESSA Chart notes for 23 May indicate "Closest separation between the opposite-polarity spots coincided with great white-light, proton flare at 1840 UTC...". At that time when the region extended from 27-30 N solar latitude and 25-28 E longitude, it produced extraordinary, hours-long SRBs, a two-ribbon H-α flare, seven minutes of localized white-light flare emissions, and multiple hours of enhanced X-ray emissions (Lincoln, 1969). Several measures of dayside SID radio disturbances went off scale. Two mid-latitude solar observatories, Sacramento Peak (optical), NM, and Sagamore Hill (radio), MA, observed the events in real time. The peak emissions occurred at approximately sunset in European time zones and near noon local time in the US central states [See Fig. 9 of *Richmond and Venkateswaran*, 1971]. The northern polar regions, where the BMEWS was based (See figure on p. 38 of *Winkler and Webster* [1997]], were nearing 24 hours of sunlit conditions with uninterrupted low elevation solar viewing at many locations.

Following the flare emissions there appeared a long-lived SPE beginning late on 23 May, and a geomagnetic storm with six hours at Kp = 9 and a Dst Index of -387 nT (the eighth largest Dst storm on record), on May 25-26, 1967 [Cliver and Svalgaard, 2004]. The cosmic ray Forbush decrease associated with the behemoth plasma cloud(s) lasted into early June of 1967 (see Fig 1. of Carmichael and Steljes [1969]). The overall activity was so intense that it merited a special ESSA report [Lincoln, 1969]. Evaluation of the published data indicates there was a long lasting radio-communication and monitoring disruption affecting civilian and DoD customers in the sunlit areas and in the polar caps. In the militarily tense era

of 1967 a multi-frequency radio disruption was ripe for misinterpretation.

2.2 Solar Bursts and Emissions Across the Spectrum

On 23 May Howard DeMastus and Rod Stover were on flare patrol at the Sacramento Peak Optical Observatory in support of SOFNET. AF Chief Warrant Officer Walter Clark operated and calibrated five sets of microwave equipment at Sagamore Hill Observatory during the height of the storm on 23 May. Patrick McIntosh from ESSA was monitoring solar activity in Boulder, CO. DeMastus and Stover [1967] reported three pulses of flaring between 1805 UT- 2300 UT, including a flare wave that traveled 0.3 solar radii in only five minutes during the second pulse. It was during this pulse that the white light flare appeared. Najita and Orrall [1971] estimate that for a few minutes the solar flare white light emissions increased by 6% above local quiet background. The incredible 23 May flares were captured on photographic film (Figs. 1 and 4) allowing a detailed post-event analysis. (See pages 5-6 of DeMastus and Stover, 1969). Dodson and Hedeman [1969] examined the films and reported three enhancements of H-α flares at the 3-Brilliant (3B) importance level (areal coverage ranging from 1200-1800 millionths of the solar disk) during 1805-2300 UT on 23 May. The two latter flares, occurring within tens of minutes of each other, had a comprehensive flare index (CFI) values of 16. According to *Dodsen and Hedeman* [1971] only eight flares exceeding CFI level-15 were recorded from 1955 to 1969, thus 23 May flares suggested extraordinary solar activity.

The radio portion of the solar spectrum was even more disturbed. *Covington* [1969] designated the radio signature between 1835 and 1935 UT as a 'Great Burst' with an F10.7 cm (2800 MHz) peak flux of 8000 solar flux units (SFU), (10⁻²² Wm⁻² Hz⁻¹). According to

data in *Nita et al.* [2002] the probability of a burst exceeding 8000 SFU at frequencies > 2GHz is ~1% (See also Fig. 3 of *Nita et al.* [2004]). *Barron et al.* [1980] show a peak flux of 85100 SFU at 1.415 GHz, which is one of the frequencies used by the current-day GPS. *Castelli et al.* [1968] from the Sagamore Hill radio observatory reported record solar radio bursts at several frequencies with the flare sequence. Peak flux densities exceeded 20000 SFU at 8800 MHz and reached 373000 SFU at 606 MHz (Fig. 5). The ESSA SDL observation at 184 MHz showed the radio burst as "off the scale" [*Leighton*, 1969].

Castelli et al. [1968] state that "...the first radio burst was small; the third was by far the largest.... The flux densities of the third burst may have been the highest ever recorded in the decimeter portion of the radio spectrum and amongst the largest four in the 8800 MHz region." They further reported that sweep frequency observations from 19–39 MHz showed Type-IV emission with Type-II bursts embedded in the Type-IV continuum. *Garriott et al.* [1967] reported compromise of the 137.35 MHz telemetry signal from the ATS-1 geostationary satellite at the same frequency.

Given these data, and even though no direct solar radio observations were being made at 440 MHz, it is virtually certain that extremely high radio flux also occurred at that operating frequency of the DoD's BMEWS.

Although not reported in real-time, space-based observations confirmed the intensity of solar activity in other portions of the spectrum. *Van Allen* (1968), using data from an X-ray detector (0.2-1.2 nm) on the Explorer 33 satellite reported three distinct X-ray flux enhancements during the event (Fig. 5). The first flare, an approximate M3-class flare occurred at 18:17 UT [*Van Allen*, 1968]. The second X-ray flare had a flux of 0.65 erg cm⁻² s⁻¹ at 1846 UT (an X6 flare on today's NOAA flare scale). *Kane and Winckler* [1969] noted similar behavior for the hard X-ray fluxes measured by Orbiting Geophysical Observatory (OGO)-III satellite. At 1925 UT the neutron monitor onboard a Vela satellite observed an increase in

energetic particles, presumably from the 1846 UT flare [*Křivský*, *and Pintér*, 1969] (Note the Vela neutron monitor could not discriminate between high energy protons and neutrons, [*Asbridge*, 2016]). While the effects of the second flare were ongoing, a third flare from the same region produced an X-ray flux of 0.28 erg cm⁻²- s⁻¹ at 19:53 UT (X2-class flare). A slight increase in energetic protons (> 12 MeV) was observed after 21 UT on OGO-III. Figure 5 shows that all of the flares were long duration X-ray events, which were likely associated with CMEs.

The solar flare effects penetrated deeply into the ionosphere [Mitra, 1974]. Křivský, and Pintér [1969] noted solar flare effect (SFE) signals in ground magnetic data in the form of 'magnetic crochets'. These signals develop in the sunlit sector when flare induced ionization supports excess upper atmosphere currents and attendant magnetic perturbations at the ground. According to Richmond and Venketeswaran [1971] the SFE extended across the sunlit sector from San Juan Puerto Rico to Honolulu HI with two distinct phases. The first impulse at 1839:30 UT was the response to EUV photons enhancing the dayside F-region current system. The longer lasting variation (> 10 min) peaked at 1847 UT and was the likely signature of anomalous ionospheric D-region current systems supported by excess X-ray flux.

From the totality of the reports above we can understand that radio communications and radar monitoring during the early-mid afternoon hours (local time) of 23 May in the central US and Canada were subject to significant interference and signal loss. Simultaneously some of the fixed, high-latitude BMEWS radar faces directly pointed at the setting Sun as it produced record level radio emissions. Even BMEWS faces with non-Sun directed orientations likely had side and back lobes that were subject to solar RFI.

Other SID effects on radio circuits developed throughout the continental US and the Panama Canal Zone beginning shortly after 1830 UT [*Jean*, 1969]. *Richmond and Venketeswaran* [1971] noted the short wave fade as 3+ (the highest level, due to longevity and depth

of fade). Flare effects were evident into the dusk sector, with the ionosonde at Slough Observatory, UK, unable to acquire sounding signals from the ionosphere [Personal communication. M. Hapgood]. Garriott et al. [1967] reported sudden frequency deviations, and later full signal loss, on the 15MHz WWV transmission circuit between Fort Collins, CO and Stanford CA. The 13 MHz signal used by SDL to monitor for sudden frequency deviations (SFDs) was available during the flare at 1808 UT, however the signal was lost during the subsequent flares due to ionospheric absorption [Donnelly, 1969]. Thome and Wagner [1971] noted substantial short-lived electron density enhancements above Arecibo radar with ~300% increase in the D region and close to 100% in the E region during the 1840 UT flare, and a prolonged 25% enhancement at higher altitudes. They also reported that the Arecibo radar was unable to observe during the third flare due to the flare-related SID. Garriott et al. [1969] reanalyzed the ionospheric response to the flares and found that a substantial portion of the flare energy was in the EUV portion of the spectrum, resulting in strongly enhanced and long-lived upper F-region ionization that extended the solar flare effect. Mitra [1974] used these events to explain why the rapid succession of flares with high EUV emissions left the uppermost portion of the F region in a state of extended excess ionization. No doubt this partially explains the long-lived dayside radio communication and signal disruptions beyond those caused by the initial radio bursts.

Even with the fading of the third flare, nature was far from finished with communication disruptions. The top row of Fig 3 marks additional Level 2 or greater flares. Just as important the curves and plotted data show the profiles of energetic particle fluxes that set up the next round of solar and geomagnetic torment in the form of PCA events that intermittently shut down most HF radio communications in the polar cap.

The greater than 10 MeV proton flux rose late in the UT day of 23 May (Fig. 3). Solar energetic particles pummeled both polar atmospheres, initiating PCA events in the north-

ern hemisphere with onset at 2330 UT on 23 May [*Masley and Goedeke*, 1968 and *Cormier*, 1973] and in South Pole Antarctica at 0007 UT on 24 May [*Křivský*, *and Pintér*, 1969]. Significant fluxes of solar protons (tens-of-MeV) streaming ahead of what was certainly a very energetic CME caused a current-day S1 radiation storm early on 24 May. Figure 3 shows measurements of energetic proton flux in the northern polar cap from Satellite 1963-38C, along with first-light measurements from the Explorer 34 satellite, which launched early on 24 May [*Bostrom et al.*, 1969 and *Lanzerotti*, 1969a]. The radiation storm surpassed the S2-level by day's end. Radio signaling in the polar caps further deteriorated in the early hours of 24 May [*Masley and Goedeke*, 1968]. The equivalent of a modern day NOAA S-3 radiation storm developed on 25 May. The IMP 4 spacecraft recorded a maximum intensity of 0.75 protons (cm²-sec-sr)-1 above 94 MeV; with the maximum intensity occurring at 08 UT on 25 May [*Simpson and Fan*, 1973].

2.3 Subsequent Geomagnetic Activity and Radio Propagation Effects

The May 1967 storm was an overlapping sequence of solar events causing subsequent radiation, magnetic and ionospheric storms, which occasionally superimposed in their effects on the geospace environment. Stress on command, control and communication systems continued beyond that created by the historic radio bursts. Table 1 and Fig. 6 summarize the geomagnetic storm effects of the late May activity (See also *Akasofu et al.* [1969]). Inspection of Fig. 6 shows that the hourly average of solar wind density ahead of the first disturbance (Fig. 5a) was ~15 particles/cm³, consistent with a high-density sheath ahead of the ejecta. *Lindgren* [1968] estimated a 40-hr Sun-Earth transit time for the event associated with the 23 May, 1845 UT flare and a 41-hr transit time for the 23 May 1946 UT flare. The near tandem arrival of these structures was likely important in the subsequent storm energet-

ics. The wave of solar energetic particles peaked at Earth orbit with a classic sharp rise and geomagnetic SC associated with arrival of the first shock at 1021 UT on 25 May. A second SC, measured by extraordinary number of ground station (45) at 1235 UT and accompanied by rising solar wind speeds (Fig. 6b), initiated the eighth largest Dst storm on record. The second SC was followed immediately by the largest auroral electrojet excursion of the interval (Fig. 6g) and by excitation of a 114 kilo-Raleigh Hydrogen Lyman alpha aurora observed by satellite OVI-10 (1966-111B) during its northern hemisphere pass prior to 1300 UT. $Metzger\ and\ Clark\ [1971]\ estimated > 35\ mW/m^2\ of\ auroral\ proton\ energy\ (keV)\ deposition with the UV\ proton\ aurora. They also reported satellite-to-ground-link disturbances due to the active ionosphere. The H-<math>\alpha$ auroral emission remained well above background through 26 May 1967.

By 2030 UT on 25 May the ATS-1 geostationary satellite was in the dayside postnoon magnetosheath and remained so for more than three hours [Russell, 1976]. Although
magnetopause crossings occur about once a month averaged over the solar cycle [Dmitriev et
al. 2004], magnetopause crossings in the post-noon sector are less frequent, and events with
durations of more than an hour constitute less than one third of the observations. Thus, a
three-hour-long magnetosheath visit by ATS-1 suggests a severe magnetopause distortion.

The onboard magnetometer measured magnetosheath (shocked) southward magnetic field of
-160 nT [Coleman, 1970]. A back-of-the-envelope estimate, accounting for factor-of-four
shock enhancement of the magnetic field, suggests that the IMF vertical (Bz) component was
in the vicinity of -40 nT. The Dst vs Bz south plot in Vichare et al. [2005] indicates the value
was likely closer to -50 nT. Figure 2 of Williams and Bostrom [1969] shows the IMF was
southward through ~12 UT on 26 May.

The 26 May 1100 UT SDFC report (copied below) succinctly captures the solar-terrestrial mayhem. See supporting information file for additional bulletins.

NNNNUUV

PP KGFF

DE BOU 261100Z

FROM SPACE DISTURBANCE FORECAST CENTER ESSA BOULDER COLO,

SPACE DISTURBANCE FORECAST NUM1BER 540D ISSUED 1100 Z

MAY 26 1967

THE PROTON EVENT CONTINUES, AS WELL AS THE VERY SEVERE MAGNETIC STORM. DURING THE NEXT 12 HOURS, MAJOR FLARES ARE LIKELY.

THE IMPORTANCE TWO NORMAL FLARE AT 26/0205Z HAS BEEN RECLASSIFIED AS IMPORTANCE THREE NORMAL. THE FLARE DID NOT' OCCUR WITHIN THE MAJOR DELTA CONFIGURATION BUT MAY ADD TO THE PRESENT PROTON EVENT.

AURORA IS REPORTED AS FAR SOUTH AS NEW MEXICO.
BT

Data in Figure 6 show that the full force of the geomagnetic storm developed in stages, with the exceptional Dst downturn beginning in the later UT hours of 25 May. This timing is consistent with the ATS-1 geostationary measurement of the 160 nT southward magnetosheath fields beginning at ~ 20 UT. Geomagnetic storm effects were impressive (Table 1), with aurora observed in central Europe and in the southern US [Findlay et al., 1969]. They

also reported extraordinary electron temperatures and densities in the auroral zone. Jacchia [1969] used satellite drag measurements from six spacecraft at altitudes ranging from 338-1001 km to infer a global neutral atmosphere temperature increase (spike) of 400 K that lagged storm onset by ~6.5 hours. In an amazing coincidence the US Air Force had launched the then-classified Low-G Accelerometer Calibration System (LOGACS) on an Agena satellite into a near-polar low Earth Orbit on 22 May 1967. The accelerometer remained in orbit through 26 May providing the first expanded view of neutral winds and density perturbations over the altitude range of 140-400 km during an extreme storm. [DeVries, [1972] and Bruce, [1972]]. LOGACS revealed deep neutral density bulges and troughs as well as >1500 m/s neutral winds during the storm main phase. From 22-26 May the satellite apogee decayed by more than 100 km from 403 km to 296 km. DeVries [1972] argued that the data also supported the idea of Joule-heating driven neutral density waves, which is consistent with the idea of ionospheric gravity waves proposed by *Hines* [1960], although the neutral density wave idea was not without controversy [Allan and Cook, 1974]. These experiments helped explain the satellite tracking difficulties experienced by NORAD during the late May 1967 storm [L. Snyder, personal communication].

The Naval Research Laboratory reported loss of signal between the ground and a satellite beacon during the height of the geomagnetic disturbances [Goodman, 1968]. This situation likely developed from a superposition of ionospheric storm effects and ongoing solar disturbances in the VHF/UHF bands. The Trieste Astronomical Observatory reported saturation of its 239 MHz system radio system due to extreme solar flux at that frequency on 25 May 1967 [Abriami and Zlobec, 1968]. Solar disturbances in the VHF band are known to increase as active regions reach solar central meridian. On 25 May McMath Region 8818 was so positioned.

Global, coherent very-low-frequency oscillations developed shortly after 21 UT and

extended to low latitudes [*Harang*, 1968 and 1969]. The plasmapause eroded to within 2 R_E [*Hayakawa et al.*, 1975 and *Grebowsky et al.* 1974]. During the same time proton and electron fluxes in the inner radiation belts were undergoing modification [*Bostrom et al.*, 1970 and *Rothwell and Katz*, 1973]. Further, *Mendillo* [2006] remarked that the most prominent negative phase (reduction) in Total Electron Content (TEC) ever reported occurred on 26 May. For brevity additional geomagnetic storm effects are tabulated in Table 1.

There is an additional interesting aspect of the likely tandem-CME arrival that drove the Dst superstorm. *Lugaz and Farrugia* [2014] report that interacting CMEs may combine to produce large IMF events with deep depression of Dst and a propensity for sawtooth oscillations of the geomagnetic field. We have not been able to determine if the ATS-1 data can provide confirmation of these oscillations, however the AE index record in Fig. 6g strongly suggests rhythmic global field oscillations consistent with a sawtooth event.

Even as Earth recovered from the violent 25-26 May geomagnetic storm, McMath Region 8188 flares and emissions continued. These likely added to energetic particles fluxes already present at Earth, thus extending the ongoing PCA event and maintaining the radiation storm level at today's S1 level for a full week. A second triple eruption from Region 8818 started at 0546 UT on 28 May. This flare was reported at N28, W32, an ideal location for energetic particle access to Earth. Figure 3 shows that while the most energetic particles arrived first, nearly all channels recorded dramatic increases of energetic proton flux in only minutes, resulting in another S3 radiation storm. *Lanzerotti* [1969b] argued that this sharp enhancement was the result of a combination of solar wind structuring from multiple incoming shocks, a possible sector boundary crossing, and the flare-associated protons.

The interplanetary disturbance(s) from the 25-26 May flares arrived on 28 May producing SCs and generating a strong geomagnetic storm with maximum Kp = 7- and 12 hours of moderate storming, G2, Kp=6, conditions. The geomagnetic disturbance from the 28

May flare likely reached Earth at mid-day on 30 May [Table IV, *Lindgren*, 1968] creating a sudden impulse but not a geomagnetic storm.

The extended Forbush decrease shown in the South Pole neutron monitor data (Fig. 6h) gives a general sense of the magnitude of heliospheric disturbance produced by the series of combined shocks and CMEs. Only in early June did Earth exit the cosmic ray shadow (Forbush decrease) generated by the merged structures [*Carmichael and Steljes*, 1969]. The inner radiation belts disturbances linked to these storms lasted for months. [*Bostrom et al.*, 1970, *Rothwell and Katz* 1973, and *Tomblin and Kreplin*, 1970].

2.4 How Severe Were The May 1967 Storms?

Clearly the May 1967 event was a superposition of solar, magnetospheric and ionospheric storms. How should we categorize these? The radio bursts following the white-light flare on May 23 were designated as 'Great Bursts' [Castelli et al., 1968]. In particular, those authors reported an extraordinary burst of 373,000 solar flux units at 606 MHz, which was the largest, observed as of that date. *Klobuchar et al.* [1999] listed the May 23 event as the top SRB at 1.4 GHz (current GPS L1 frequency). Note that the December 2006 event discussed in *Cerruti et al.* [2008] is now recognized as the top SRB event at the L1 frequency with a burst >100000 SFU. With regard to ionospheric disruptions, the May 1967 events were at or near the top of the list. *Mitra* [1974, Chap. 6] categorizes the solar flare event as 'outstanding', noting that the SFD was, at the time, the largest observed at Boulder CO, USA, since Boulder started measuring SFDs. *Mitra* further used the 21 and 23 May events as examples of extraordinary ionospheric behavior throughout his text. In a review of ionospheric storms *Mendillo* [2006] remarked that the 25-26 May ionospheric positive-negative storm was 'extreme' with the negative phase being the largest on record. As far as sustained distur-

bances across many facets of the ionosphere, especially in the polar cap, the storm ranks high. Yet the storm defies easy categorization. Radio bursts do not have a scale, primarily because interference is so system-specific. For similar reasons ionospheric disturbances are without a widely-accepted scale.

On the NOAA geomagnetic storm scale, the event was a G5 (extreme) storm—a level of storm that would be expected about four times per solar cycle—thus a likely top 20 level storm in the last four solar cycles. In terms of X-ray output, and solar radiation the storm reached R3 and S3 levels (strong). The longevity of the excess EUV emissions were most likely extreme based on descriptions in the previous section, but again there does not seem to be a benchmark for this.

As a magnetospheric disturbance, the 25-26 May event ranks near the top in the record books. With Dst value of -387 nT *Cliver and Svalgaard* [2004] rate the storm in the "top ten" of all events since 1932. In their Figure 4 plot of the Aa_m" vs Dst indices, the event appears to be in lower left, thus in the top 10 of extreme events. *Balan et al.* [2016] considered the average main phase value of Dst, called Dst_{MP}, and also put the 25-26 May event in the top ten. There were likely large rhythmic oscillations in the geomagnetic field based on a number of indicators, however a scale for these does not exist. The magnetopause was within geosynchronous orbit for at least three hours before the only orbiting geostationary satellite re-entered the post-noon magnetosphere. Nonetheless, the storm did not have the combination of solar wind speed and southward IMF needed to meet the impulsiveness criteria for severe storm classification given by *Balan et al.* [2015]—the arrival speed was apparently too low. Consistent with this, no records of significant GICs have been found. The aurora was observed near the southern US border (latitude of 32° geographic, *Castelli et al.* [1968]) and in central Europe—falling far short of the great low latitude auroral events of the 1800's.

Beyond the scales, indices, adjectives, and numerics used in most comparative storm studies, there are less tangible factors that make this space weather storm unique. The geomagnetic effects and radio absorption events were consistent with expectations for strong to extreme storming, however these effects were compounded by the superposition of effects and by the extraordinary radio burst, which caused the "drastic impacts...to NORAD's early warning systems". We argue these additive effects and the repercussions of this storm push the May 1967 storm into the historically "Great" category, similar to those listed in *Hapgood* [2010].

3. Discussion: Storm Impacts and Legacies

3.1 May 1967 Storm Impacts: Radio Frequency Interference and Space Weather Support

Returning now to the effects of the solar radio bursts, the BMEWS was a multi-site and multi-antenna radar system operating at 440 MHz at sites in Alaska, USA, Thule, Greenland, and Yorkshire, England. Basic sun angle calculations indicate that the setting, and very active Sun was "visible" to all of the BMEWS radars late in the UT day on 23 May, with the Thule radar particularly well aligned. Although not overtly stated by *Citrone* [1995], authors of this manuscript present for the event or involved in the post-event analysis, attest that many of the 'impacts' were from the record SRBs. Such an intense, never-before-observed solar radio burst was interpreted as jamming. (Recall that a similar situation occurred in the early days of radar development in World War II when 'enemy jamming' turned out to be solar RFI [*Hey*, 1946]). Cold War military commanders viewed full scale jamming of surveillance sensors as a potential act of war. While no detail of the nature of the 'incident' is provided in *Citrone* [1995], the online memorial tributes to Col C. K. Anderson, on the occa-

sion of his passing in late 2015, clearly credit him and his NORAD solar forecasting staff (in particular Maj. Donald Sherry and Capt. Lee Snyder) with providing the information that eventually calmed nerves and allowed aircraft engines to cool as they returned to normal alert stance. With the limited data available at the time AWS solar forecasters were able to extract sufficient information from AFCRL solar observations to convince high-level decision makers at NORAD that the Sun was a likely culprit in contaminating the BMEWs radar signals. Thus, it appears that unlike some of the human-error and mis-communication events in the 1970's [Forden, 2001], bombers did not take to the skies, but were nonetheless positioned to do so.

While it may seem curious to place so much emphasis on a "hold the aircraft" decision,

it is well worth noting that during the politically tense days of late May 1967 a full out aircraft launch by Western forces could have been very provocative, and just as importantly, difficult (if not impossible) to recall in the greatly challenged HF - UHF radio environment. SAC crews were trained to 'complete the mission' unless clearly recalled (see discussion at George Washington University's National Security Archive page:

http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb304/). Since the decision chain for responding to the early warning system incident went to the "highest levels of government", it is likely that the timely information about the space environment, provided first to NORAD (and ultimately to SAC and the Pentagon) turned a grave situation into a manageable one.

We do not know if the May 1967 event was the first of its kind in the modern era (although it seems likely), we do know from entries in the online history of Air Weather Service that space environment/weather has been and continues to be monitored for its role in technology and communication anomalies:

"6 – 20 Mar (1989) Period of strong solar activity caused an uncommon Polar Cap Absorption event that crippled High Frequency (HF) communications, caused interference and high noise levels for Very High Frequencies (VHF), degraded radar performance, caused satellite communications problems, enhanced satellite charging, (caused) satellite tracking, and compass alignment problems."

"15 Jul 2002 Space weather forecasters, from the recently activated AFWA Space Weather Operations Center (SPACEWOC), issued their first event-level warning to the 614th Space Operations Group based on an observed solar flare. At 15/1959Z, the sun in region 0030 produced a flare that reached X3.0 category in x-rays and had several event-level radio bursts shortly after that time. A (NORAD) Command radar site confirmed it had "painted multiple inbounds.""

(Note: The reference to "region 0030" is to NOAA AR 10030 and 'multiple inbounds' relates to the NORAD radar producing a false detection of incoming targets due to RFI.)

"6-7 & 14 Dec (2006) AFWA (Air Force Weather Agency) space weather operations noted two significant solar events. On 6-7 December, space weather operators noted two M flares and an X6.5 X-Ray flare. The X6.5 flare produced significant radio bursts, a proton event, and a geomagnetic storm. Five moderate to severe unclassified impacts to communications were reported and one impact was reported to an unclassified radar site…."

Beyond impacts on DoD systems the May 1967 events provide a data point for current-day cell-phone communication and navigation vulnerabilities. *Gary et al.*, [2005] note that a cell phone base station may experience enhanced noise during SRB's. Bursts exceed-

ing ~1000 SFU "may begin to cause problems for the system if the horizon-looking antennas are pointed at the rising or setting Sun." They further state that bursts with an order of magnitude more flux are likely to be more disruptive. The 23 May 1967 radio burst may have been quite disruptive at base station frequencies. *Cerruti et al.* [2008] have expressed similar concerns about sensitivities of GNSS signals to extreme radio bursts. While the May 1967 radio fluxes reported near the current day GPS L1/L2 frequencies were likely not sufficient to cause significant GPS disruption had the system existed, the fluxes during the 6 December 2006 event clearly crossed the disruption threshold.

3.2 Legacy: US Air Force Space Environment Support System

Citrone [1995] attributes the larger role of AWS Space Environment personnel in AF decision-making to the May 1967 'incident'. Within months of the May 1967 storms a formal AWS ionospheric section began supporting ionospheric-dependent systems, with the first supported operational system being the 440L over-the-horizon radar operating over the Eurasian continent [Townsend et al., 1982]. In late 1968 AWS unveiled a Space Environment Support System (SESS) organization plan, which consolidated several space monitoring systems, including SOFNET. SESS efforts targeted required operational capabilities in ionospheric, neutral density and radiation effects, as well as support to NORAD. By 1969 the ionospheric forecasting effort expanded to a 24-hour operation. This effort was so computer intensive that SESS Forecast Center moved to Air Force Global Weather Central (AFGWC) at Offutt AFB in 1973 to use increased computer power available there, with a by-product being closer alignment with SAC. In 1972 NOAA and AWS agreed that cooperative efforts in space environment forecasting would be mutually beneficial [Poppe, 2006, Chap. 8]. Thus began a longstanding partnership that extends to present day.

We will not revisit here the intricacies of SESS program development since a richer history of SESS can be gleaned from various entries in *Townsend et al.* [1982], and the online history of AWS: http://www.557weatherwing.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-131104-184.pdf and the brief discussion in Section 5.4.11 of *Goodman* [2005]. Rather we highlight some aspects of SESS-related activities that have had long-term impacts: The growth of SESS as an enterprise within AWS, the AF solar monitoring program, Education and Training, Scientific Investigations and the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program. Each of these is worthy of a separate historical manuscript.

Growth of SESS. Figure 7 provides a sense of the growth in active duty staffing for space environment support as an enterprise within AF. The first significant increase in staffing was the result of initiating SOFNET and establishing the Solar Forecast Unit in NCMC. A second large delta followed in 1968-1969 as AWS created a broader and more formal space environment support system, SESS, for DoD-at-large. As indicated by *Citrone* [1995], and consistent with the memories of several authors of this manuscript, the May 1967 storm was a catalyst for SESS growth after the storm impacts received significant attention at the Pentagon, Developing DoD reliance on space assets sustained the momentum.

Solar Electro-Optical Network (**SEON**). The expansion of SEON is perhaps the most tangible hardware legacy of events in the 1960's. After USAF's Sacramento Peak Observatory started daily flare patrols in 1951 the value of the observations became clear. From the early 1960's solar observatories provided input to real-time military and civilian space weather watches, warnings, and alerts. In 1969 AF solar observers were operating out of Tehran, Iran; Athens, Greece; Manila, Philippines and four US locations. Four overseas and North American ESSA solar observatories sometime filled in gaps. USAF solar observatories have maintained eyes on the Sun through the decades [e.g. *Castelli et al.*, 1973, *Fitts and Loftin*, 1993].

The current day AF solar observing network operates optical (O) and radio (R) instruments at five sites: Learmonth, Australia (O and R), San Vito, Italy (O and R), Sagamore Hill, MA (R), Kaena Point, HI (R), and Holloman AFB, NM (O). Optical sites provide data on sunspots, flares, filaments and magnetic field configuration. Radio sites monitor the radio interference and emissions at discrete frequencies (15400, 8800, 4995, 2695, 1415, 610, 410, and 245 MHz). Additionally, radio spectrographs sweep their observations between 25-75 MHz and 75-180 MHz to search for signals of moving transients in the solar atmosphere [557th Weather Wing, 2016].

Education and Training: A long-lived SESS educational program developed, with hundreds of AWS personal earning advanced degrees and/or attending intense space environment short courses. After retirement many of these soldier-scientists moved into influential civilian industry and academic careers. As AFCRL became the Air Force Geophysics Laboratory (AFGL) interest in the space environment grew to the point that AFGL published the now widely used Handbook of Geophysics and the Space Environment [*Jursa*, 1985]. This 25-chapter monograph provided an encyclopedic summary of what was known about the space environment and its interactions with the atmosphere.

Scientific investigations: Operational needs generated numerous scientific studies, some of which were performed by groups within AFCRL. Two of the most long-lived efforts were for prediction of energetic protons and satellite drag. Development of the Proton Prediction System spanned decades [Smart and Shea, 1979]. Other studies were contracted or granted to civilian universities and businesses, in particular the Parameterized Real Time Ionospheric Specification Model and the Magnetospheric Specification Model. Oder et al. [2004] chronicle the AFCRL and AFGL support for SESS (and include a brief mention of the May 1967 event). The Air Force Office of Scientific Research became a leading funder of SESS-related

research and today continues to fund research efforts in satellite drag prediction.

Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP): DMSP developed as a classified weather project in the early-1960's [*Fuller*, 1990 and Hall, 2001] and was declassified in the mid-1970's. In 1970 AFCRL initiated a research program to correlate DMSP auroral photographs with the actual structures of the polar ionosphere. USAF has provided nearly 100 satellite years of particle and upper atmosphere state data to the archives of NOAA's NCEI STP. These DMSP data have contributed to 1000's of space-related scientific studies worldwide.

The long-term military impacts of this storm were significant and perhaps unequalled. The May 1967 storm(s) brought about sustained changes in the way the US Air Force (and DoD) viewed the space environment, allowing investments in monitoring equipment and forecasting systems that have paralleled, and to some degree provided a foundation for, similar civilian activities. As far as long term societal impacts, we are all left to think about how the outcomes of the May 23, 1967 solar radio storms could have been different in the absence of trained and astute AWS solar observers/forecasters who provided crucial information that reached decisions makers at the highest levels of government.

4 Conclusions

We have provided a broad perspective of the space weather impacts associated with the late May 1967 solar radio bursts, flares, energetic particles and coronal mass ejections from McMath Region 8818. Impacts on the important technology systems of the day reached critical levels. The May 67 event was long lasting with a series of events following McMath Region 8818 across the disk of the Sun. The largest solar radio burst of the 20th Century (at spe-

cific frequencies) produced 373000 SFU at 606 MHz. The F10.7 cm flux rose briefly to 8000 SFU. Military radio technologies were severely impacted by: 1) solar radio bursts, 2) solar energetic particle deposition, and 3) general disruption of ionospheric radio and ground-to-satellite communication channels. The magnetosphere was in a near-record state as measured by the Dst Index and many other parameters. Satellite drag effects were demonstrated and quantified. The polar cap experienced ongoing communication outages for over a week. The near Earth inner heliosphere was in a cosmic ray shadow (i.e. Forbush decrease) for more than two weeks. Inner radiation belt variations in electron content were still being measured months after the driver event. From the perspective of the authors of this manuscript, some of whom had close knowledge of the event(s), the role of Air Force SESS personnel was critical in maintaining the well-being of the nation and the world as the May 1967 storm unfolded. Further, the May 1967 space weather events created a cascade of important decisions and studies that have contributed to the field of Space Weather as we know it, thus providing information to system engineers, and decision- and policy-makers at many levels, even today.

Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

See Table S1 in the Supporting Information.

Acknowledgements: This paper was motivated by the lead author's discussions and interactions at the October 2015 Space Weather Enterprise Forum in Washington DC, which revealed a need to capture some of the space weather history of the Air Weather Service Space Environment Support System (SESS). DJK is grateful to Lee Snyder, who was the NORAD Solar Forecasting Unit Duty Forecaster on 23 May 1967, for assistance with this manuscript. Several authors have been associated with DoD space environment support efforts: DJK, ACR, EDB, ALB, WTC are all retired members of USAF AWS and most served at NCMC. WFD, DFS and MAS supported space environment efforts at AFRL. LMK, IMH, and RM

supported this effort with illustrations and calculations. DJK thanks many contributors for their thoughtful inputs and assistance including Arthur Richmond, Kenneth Moe and Dieter Bilitza. DJK was partially supported by NSF grant DES-1446704 via a contract with Queensborough Community College of New York. The images in Figure 1 are from the historical collections of the National Solar Observatory; Data were acquired by the Flare Patrol H-alpha instrument operated by NSO/AURA/NSF (and previously by USAF). The re-drawings of Carrington Rotations 1520 and 1521 and McMath Plage region 8818 are from IMH and RM who are partially supported by NSF RAPID grant 1540544. Figure 4 is from Data on Solar Event of May 23, 1967 and its Geophysical Effects, WDC-A Report UAG-5, ESSA, Boulder, http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/stp/space-weather/online-publications/stp_uag/ (Accessed 08 May 2016). Solar wind and indice data in Figure 5 are from NASA OmniWeb: http://omniweb.gsfc.nasa.gov/ow.html. The South Pole Neutron Monitor data in Fig. 5h are from http://neutronm.bartol.udel.edu/~pyle/bri_table.html. The South Pole neutron monitor is supported by National Science Foundation award PLR-1341562. DJK benefited from library access at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) High Altitude Observatory (HAO). NCAR is supported by the National Science Foundation.

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Table 1 25-27 May 1967 Geomagnetic, Ionospheric and Atmospheric Effects at 1 AU

Effect	Measurement	References
Ground Magnetic and Io-	Kp = 9 for 6 hours = NOAA G5	NASA OMNIweb
nosphere Severe Storm	class	Findlay et al. [1969]
nospiicie severe storiii	$Kp \ge 7$ - for 27 continuous hours	Cliver and Svalgaard
	-	[2004]
Extreme Israenharia Starm	Top 25 Aa_m^* storm; $Aa_m^* = 274$	
Extreme Ionospheric Storm	100% TEC increase on 25 May	Webb [1969]
25-26 May	due to geomagnetic storm followed	Low and Roelofs [1973]
Severe positive-negative	by	Mendillo [2006]
phases	Most dominant negative phase in	
	TEC ever recorded	G 1 [1070]
Significant auroral precipi-	Scintillation on satellite beacon	Goodman [1968]
tation effects	signal—Signal lost early 25 May	E' 11 1 510 col
Hot ionosphere at 1000 km	Electron Temperature > 6500 K	Findlay et al. [1969]
	Extraordinary structuring in elec-	
	tron density and temperature in au-	
	roral zone observed by Explorer 22	
	satellite	
Aurora at low latitudes	New Mexico 32° north geographic, A	Castelli et al. [1967]
25-26 May	abama; Overhead in Washington DC	Findlay et al. [1969] Fig 1
	Class II aurora in Devon, UK; off-sc	Smith and Weber [1968]
	intensity;	Table 1
Significant keV auroral pro-	> 35 mW/m ² during polar pass of	Metzger and Clark [1971]
ton precipitation May 25-26	satellite OV1-10; 114 kR of emissio	
Heated Thermosphere	400 K temperature spike after 6 hr	Jacchia [1969]
Satellite Drag	LOGACS apogee decreases by 100	DeVries [1972]
	km	
Geomagnetic Micro pulsa-	"Spasmodic" pulsations of	Smith and Webber [1968]
tions	40 mV/km at 10-20 mHz	
Coherent Global Oscilla-	Simultaneous global oscillations at	Harang [1968 and 1969]
tions in VLF Emissions	5-8 kHz, US, Europe, Japan	
Plasmapause greatly dis-	Plasmasphere Eroded to ~L=2	Hayakawa et al., [1975]
torted	Complex filamentary structure	Grebowsky et al. [1974]
Dst Superstorm 8 th largest	Sudden Commencement +55 nT	Kyoto Dst record
May 25-26	$Dst = -387 \text{ nT}$; mean $Dst_{MP} = -230$	Balan et al. [2016]
	nT	Akasofu et al. [1969]
	Very asymmetric ring current	
Magnetospheric compres-	Commencements (SSCs)	Lindgren (1968) including
sions	Near equatorial ΔH of 737 nT	Figs. 6 and 9 and Table IV
May 25-May 30	•	
Structuring of solar energet-	Energetic proton enhancements	Lindgren (1968) Fig. 4
ic particle fluxes	ahead of and at SSC's 24-31 May	Bostrom [1969]
	IMP-1 and IMP-4	Lanzerotti [1969a,b]
Magnetopause inside GEO	> 3 hours; 2039 -2354 UT	Russell [1976]
orbit on May 25	ATS-1 Geostationary satellite	Coleman [1970]
Semi-permanent distur-	Factor of 100 increase in 0.28 MeV	Bostrom et al., [1970]
bances in electron and pro-	electrons at L=2.2	Rothwell and Katz (1973)
ton radiation belts at L < 3.5	Increase of 0.265 MeV protons be-	Tomblin and Kreplin
ton radiation botts at L \3.3	tween L= 2.25 - 3.25 on May 25	(1970)
	the con L = 2.23 3.23 on may 23	(1710)

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	6	

Stepped Forbush Cosmic	11% at Deep River observatory	Harang [1968b]
Ray Decrease	Marked north-south asymmetry	Akasofu et al. [1969] Fig.
	Cosmic ray steaming direction re-	8
	versed May 25-31	Lindgren [1968]

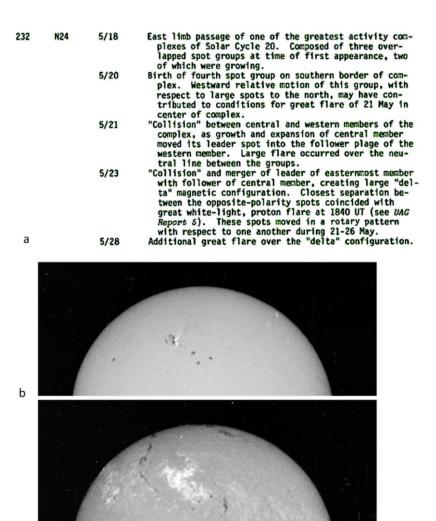


Figure 1. a) Notes on the dynamics of McMath Region 8818, extracted from *McIntosh*, [1979, Pg. 84]; b) May 23 1967, 1840:50 UT, H- α wing image, 656.28 nm, $\Delta\lambda$ =+/-0.2 nm; c) 1844:00 UT, H- α emission 656.28 nm, line center. North is at the top. West is to the right. [Courtesy of National Solar Observatory].

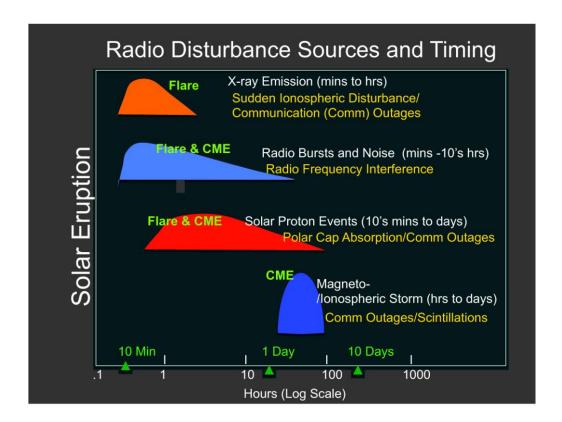


Fig. 2. Simplified summary of radio disturbances generated by a single solar eruption. Each colored element represents a different disturbance category. The light green labels show the origin at the Sun. The white labels show the space weather disturbance categories commonly discussed in the literature. The yellow labels name the effects observed at Earth. The top three categories have rapid onsets and slower decays. The horizontal axis is in log hours in time-since-emission at the Sun. The dark green labels provide reference times in minutes and days. As an example, energetic protons may be generated by flare processes and begin arriving at Earth in as little as 20 min. They may continue be energized by coronal mass ejections (CME) and be present at Earth for some time after CME passage. Log scaling tends to compress larger values, hence, the visual duration of CMEs appears short in this diagram. In fact CME's and SPEs both influence geospace for hours to days. More complex storms like those discussed in this manuscript will have multiple overlying events.



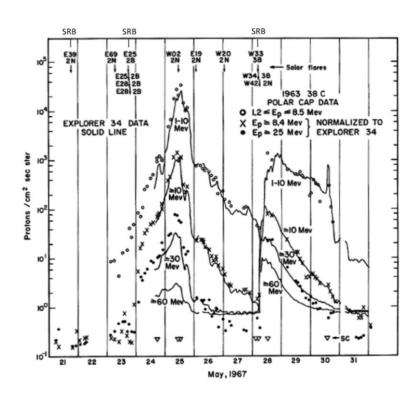


Fig. 3 Flare timing and solar energetic particle data for 21-31 May 1967 from Satellites 1963-38C and Explorer 34 from *Bostrom et al.* (1969) ESSA UAG-5 Report. Solar flare locations in east and west longitude with respect to central are on the top line. Numbers followed by letters N or B give relative size and qualitative emission level (N=normal, B = brilliant). The solar radio bursts information is extracted from *Castelli and Barron* [1977]. Explorer 34 (date in solid curves) was launched while the storm was in progress on 24 May 1967.

Fig 4. (a-c) Re-drawings of portions of Hydrogen alpha (H α) synoptic charts of Carrington Rotation 1521 from *McIntosh*, [1979, p 83, 85 and 87]. Orange dots represent sunspots. Gray areas are regions of closed magnetic field. The yellow zones (above 70°) lack data. The blue box in (b) highlights McMath Region 8818, during CR 1521, c) Enlargement of image in (b); (d-f) Sacramento Peak enlarged flare imagery after *DeMastus and Stover*, [1967]; (d) H- α wing 656.28 nm, $\Delta\lambda$ =+/-0.2 nm; (e) 1844:00 UT, H- α emission 656.28 nm, line center; (f) White light, two small dots indicate white light flare at 1840 UT; (g) Magnetic polarities (N-North and S-South) of McMath Region 8818 on 21-25 May measured at the Crimean Astrophysical Observatory from *McIntosh* [1969]. More details on the complex sunspot groups and tight solar magnetic field gradient are available in *McIntosh* [1969], *Malville and Tandberg-Hanssen* [1969] and *McIntosh and Donnelly* [1972].



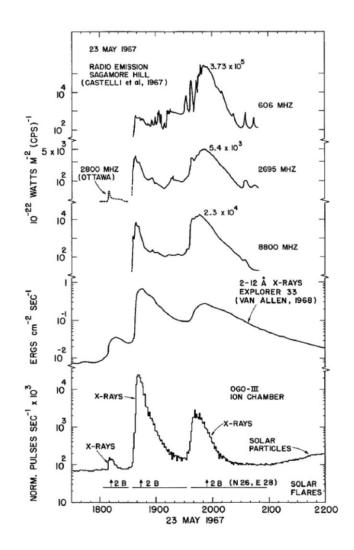


Fig. 5 Profiles of solar radio and X-ray emissions on 23 May 1967 from Kane and Winckler, (1969) ESSA UAG-5 Report. The interval covers the three primary flares of 23 May 1967.

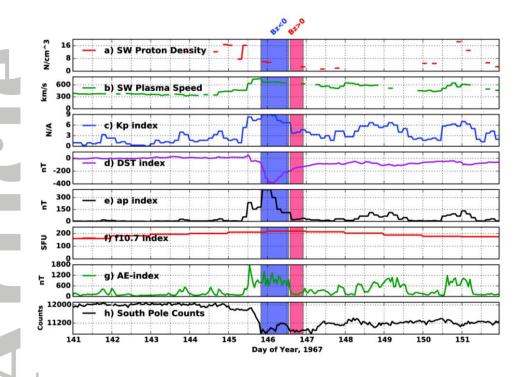


Fig. 6. Indices and Observations for 21-23 May 1967. a) Hourly solar wind density, b) hourly averaged solar wind speed. c) 3-hr Kp index, d) Hourly Dst index, e) 3-hr ap index, f) Daily F10.7 cm solar radio flux index, g) Hourly auroral electroject index, h) South Pole Neutron Monitor Station counts. IMF Bz orientations extracted from *Coleman* [1970] and *Williams and Bostrom* [1969]



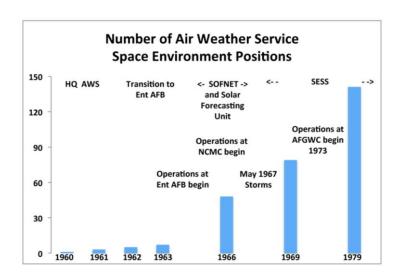


Fig. 7. Number of active duty AWS Space Environment Support Positions. These numbers are taken from historical reports and rosters as well as the online AWS history. Values have an uncertainty of about 20% given that military members were often reassigned on short notice and some performed both SESS and non-SESS duties.

Sweet Fanny Adams

deadmaidens.com

Posted on 24/08/2016 by deadmaidens

On this day 149 years ago, eight year old Fanny Adams was brutally murdered by Frederick Baker, a 29 year old solicitor's clerk. Her grave still stands in Alton Cemetery, adorned lovingly with teddies, tea lights and flowers. Perhaps her name is familiar to you. Maybe you have heard the phrase "Sweet Fanny Adams" or "Sweet FA", you may even use it. Death & the Maiden's co-founder Lucy Talbot asks how is it that this murdered child has come to mean nothing at all?

On the 24th of August, 1867 the remains of eight year old Fanny Adams were found strewn across a hop field close to her home in Alton, Hampshire. David Rowland, who has researched the case and written a detailed account of Fanny's death, described the horrifying scene in graphic detail:

"Her head and legs had been severed, her eyes firstly having been removed from her head and were found in the nearby River Wey, where they were recovered from. The head, after the eyes had been gouged out was found stuck on a small hop pole. As well as the gouged-out eyes, one of her ears had been torn off. The torso had been split open and all the inside organs had been removed and then scattered around the hop field. Each arm was found in different places within the field, still clutched in one hand were the two half-pennies that Baker had given to Fanny. One foot was found in a field of clover. It was several days before every part of her body and parts had been recovered. Fanny's remains were taken to a nearby surgery at No. 16, Amery Street, Alton where her body was put back together again."

Earlier that day, around lunch time Fanny, her younger sister Lizzie and friend Minnie Warner had encountered Frederick Baker (a 29 year old solicitor's clerk) on Tan House Lane. Giving the two other girls three half pence to go to the shop and buy some sweets, he also offered money to Fanny in exchange for accompanying him. She took the money and then refused to go. Baker is then believed to have scooped Fanny up in his arms and headed off towards the hop field.



Fanny Adams

Whilst frantically searching for Fanny, her mother spotted Baker and confronted him. Demanding to know what he had done with her daughter. His denial of knowing what had happened did not serve him long. When the police found him blood spots on his clothes outweighed any account Baker gave. It would be his own diary entry written on the day of Fanny's murder that would later seal his fate in court:

"Killed a young girl. It was fine and hot."

Baker was hung above the main gate at Winchester Jail (now a Wetherspoons) on Christmas Eve, 1867. Thousands (reportedly the majority of which were women and children) pitched up to witness his last breath.

The case of Fanny Adams was high profile to say the least, up and down the country people talked of the young girl and her hideous fate. The story was told long after Fanny's death. In fact, Fanny still lives on the lips of many today. Just recently, I worked at a doctor's surgery (whilst "in between dreams") and was surprised when the Practice Manager exclaimed "he knew Sweet Fanny Adams about it" during our

conversation. If you know the origin of this throw away phrase it is hard not to flinch a little. Because this little girl murdered 149 years ago today has come to mean "nothing." Phrase.Org explains:

'With typical grisly humour, sailors in the British Royal Navy came to use the expression [Sweet Fanny Adams] to refer to unpleasant meat rations they were often served – likening them to the dead girl's remains.

Barrère and Leland recorded this usage in their A dictionary of slang, jargon and cant, 1889:

"Fanny Adams (naval), tinned mutton"

It wasn't until later that 'sweet Fanny Adams' came to mean 'nothing'. The term 'fuck all' has long been with us with that meaning, although how long isn't clear as politeness caused it not to be recorded in print until the 20th



A drawing depicting the murder of Fanny Adams from the Police Illustrated News. Via Murderpedia

century. It surely dates back to at least the early 19th century. The coincidence of Fanny Adams' initials caused F.A. or 'Fanny Adams' to be used as a euphemism for 'fuck all'. Walter Downing, an Australian soldier who fought in Europe in the First World War, wrote an glossary of WWI soldier's slang called *Digger Dialects* in 1919. He is the first to record the link between F.A. (meaning 'fuck all') and Fanny Adams:

"F.A., 'Fanny Adams', or 'Sweet Fanny Adams' – nothing; vacuity."



Below are some pictures I took when I visited Fanny's grave to lay some flowers back in April. It was a beautiful spring morning and I was pleased to see how well her grave is looked after.

Though many utter "Sweet Fanny Adams" with no idea to whom they are referring or are unaware of the connection "Sweet FA" or "sweet fuck all" has with a murdered child. I am happy that here in Alton, Fanny is remembered and cared for by

the town she once called home.

Fanny Adams

30/04/1859 - 24/08/1867





Further Reading

Gary Martin:

http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/sweet-fanny-adams.html

John Hoskins:

http://www.dailyecho.co.uk/features/true_crime/2026904.Brutal_slaying_of_sweet_Fanny_Adams/

David Rowland:

http://www.oldpolicecellsmuseum.org.uk/page/sweet_fanny_adams



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Teresa Fidalgo, Ghost (White Lady)

incredipedia.info

Incredipedia

First and first, what is white lady?

Generally, the aspects of this phenomena are that the ghost is female associated with some local legend of tragedy, all blurry and pale, seen along a rural road.

White Lady legends are found around the world. So, a White Lady is supposed to have died or suffered trauma in life. Common to many of them is the theme of losing or being betrayed by a husband or fiancé. They are often associated with an individual family line, as a harbinger of death. When one of these ghosts is seen it indicates that someone in the family is going to die, similar to a banshee.

white ladv

banshee

Who is Teresa Fidalgo?

Teresa Fidalgo is a girl who died in 1983 in an accident...there is a little, almost none information about that accident.

There is a story about three people, who is driving around and then have car crash. They never hit anything, and just flipped over without any actual explanation.

In that accident, police authorities found a DV camera recording, which is 13-14 minutes long, which shows what had actually taken place before the accident.

They say the tape was so bizzare that police immediately destroy it...

Here is some picture where allegedly is Teresa Fidalgo.





Two years after that



accident, the film producer David Rebordão, decide to make a film about that. David Rebordão's site is at: http://www.acurva.net/. The entire clip and production procedures are available on his website on DVD format. This ghost is not real. It's just a short film made by David Rebordão.

That film was real hit on the YouTube...

The question is:

"Was he realistic as the tape found and destroyed by local police?..."







If you like this post just click here Posted By crkota with 53 comments 53 comments:

e Pat

PatriciaMoncrief says:
Tuly 16, 2015 at 9:57 PM Reply

I read this about other blog and I thought this a original story. But now i knew that this a fake story that developed by a director David Rebordão's and his camera man. You can use this best essay writing service for writing your future essay works.

Tasnim Anika 黒子のバスケ says:

The September 10, 2015 at 3:35 PM Reply

FAKE

Unknown says:

Toctober 18, 2015 at 11:23 PM Reply

Now I'm spooked. Lol but I know this is fake, but come on it gets you spooked just thinking about it. :)



Nani Lee says:

m November 2, 2015 at 2:46 PM Reply

Nani

Lee Yes it does

追 Sareena khan says:

Sar m November 4, 2015 at 5:46 AM Reply

How can a person who is dead write or text?? It's common sense. And its fake....:)

[3] francis giftson says:

frar. To November 17, 2015 at 2:39 AM Reply gift:

Its a fake story

Unknown says:

Why would people do this kind of stuff... Make a fake video... This girl died and she was must likely innocent and look at what they try and make her be... A killer. Wow just sick.



Trin Bratton says:

m December 12, 2015 at 8:28 PM Reply

Bratton Why would people do this kind of stuff... Make a fake video... This girl died and she was must likely innocent and look at what they try and make her be... A killer. Wow just sick.



Isabella Prangley says:

February 5, 2016 at 10:33 AM Reply

Isabell

Prangle Yeah you have a point Trin why can they just let the girl rest in piece

Unknown says:

You mean rest in peace, not piece.

There's a difference.

Unknown says:

Unl Tebruary 18, 2016 at 7:43 PM Reply

You mean rest in peace, not piece.

There's a difference.

BUNNY... says:

BU march 8, 2016 at 1:37 AM Reply

just a story to entertain people lol!

Unknown says:

Uni m March 17, 2016 at 7:08 AM Reply

dude im scared as hell right now a guy on oovoo send me a message and im thanking im in hell

Unknownsays:

March 20, 2016 at 12:19 PM Reply

The second picture is from a movie I saw a few weeks ago. FAKE



liam lusted says:

m March 24, 2016 at 12:02 PM Reply

liam

lusted That awkward moment you're reading a ghost story and shitting at the same time, and when you hear it hit the water, you look.

- Katie Swartz says:
- march 30, 2016 at 7:56 PM Reply

Omg I thought I was the only one! �����

carlosschafer says:

carl m March 31, 2016 at 3:33 AM Reply

Quality posts is the key to interest the viewers to pay a visit the web site, that's what this comprar zapatillas nike internationalist españa is providing.

Unknown says:

So I was jusyt bored and I saw this post on Skype about her and like I had to like look her up just BC I had no choice.

- MrVendetta420 says:
- m May 23, 2016 at 8:57 PM Reply

How is it fake? You all clearly don't believe in Ghosts

- MrVendetta420 says:
- m May 23, 2016 at 8:57 PM Reply

How is it fake? You all clearly don't believe in Ghosts

- dylan simmons says:
- i 🖮 May 28, 2016 at 10:08 PM Reply

This is really disturbing. I believe this could be real.Paranormal phenomenon is true and it is no joke. It happens after using an Ouija board.

Unknown says:

Yes...exactly...

Hanumant Bharti says:

Hai Tune 1, 2016 at 10:33 PM Reply

How is it fake? You all clearly don't believe in Ghosts

The Squad says:

illim June 6, 2016 at 6:57 AM Reply

I feel really bad for the girl and the family why would they do this to this por innocent girl. Like how dumb

Nalli Caracoza says:

I didn't send it to anyone last time and nothing bad happened to anyone. Someone sent it to me like 3 months ago and nothing happened and I believe in ghosts but I didn't see anything and nothing bad happened

Unknown says:

This mess got me scared to death

Unknown says:

This mess got me scared to death

john shaw says:

Research Paper Writing Service don't worry we are there to help.

john shaw says:

iohi 🖶 June 10, 2016 at 9:39 PM Reply

Availing the services of Academic Essay Writing Service is easy and hassle free.

WhistlingWhisp MSM says:

Ok I looked this up because I don't want a ghost sleeping beside, especially because I'm a kid and it's really weird, my friends sent this to me, and now I'm spooked, can someone debunk it or prove it?

Unknown says:

Omg I just read a message on Kik like this or should I say she send me it and now I'm scared because I don't know if one of my family members are gonna die but all I know is that I am really scared

john shaw says:

^{sha} Best Dissertation Proposal Writing Service. We can also help with complete Dissertation, Essay, Coursework or Thesis. Best Writers available!

Unknown says:

IDK if its real or not all I know is that I can really

See ghosts and if this real I'm going too really freak!!!

If its real I don't want my mom to die I really love her. Ghosts are real though. But I don't know what to think???

Unknown says:

I'm So Scared Like Some One Just Send It To Me And I Told My Mom And She Says Don't Send It But I Get Scared Real Fast Is It Real Or Fake

Samsung Johnson says:

Sar im June 15, 2016 at 3:05 PM Reply

I'm So Scared Like Some One Just Send It To Me And I Told My Mom And She Says Don't Send It But I Get Scared Real Fast Is It Real Or Fake

🔁 RachelisAwesome says:

Raι \overline June 27, 2016 at 8:13 AM Reply

I just got it and my friend got it before me and she sent me it and how could someone text if they are dead it's fake ying yang

RachelisAwesome says:

Rac 1 June 27, 2016 at 8:14 AM Reply

I just got it and my friend got it before me and she sent me it and how could someone text if they are dead it's fake ying yang

makiyah Bethea says:

Tim July 1, 2016 at 10:01 AM Reply

Ghost can have any power

makiyah Bethea says:

How do you know it is fake were you there when it happened

Harry Delaisse` says:

nobody was there because it's fake. derrh

Eve And Katie Cleverley And Wells says:

' m July 4, 2016 at 1:21 AM Reply

OMG same

Unknown says:

Uni T July 7, 2016 at 10:38 AM Reply

The Question is.. "Did it really happended back in the 80's?? And "Why would the Director choose this story" You never know if its fake or Didn't happened if you did not experienced it.hmmmm

Unknown says:

Maybe the director killed her.

- Jay Kevin says:

Really, ghosts...i dont believe in that stuff. These are the kinds of things that mess up your mind. Everything is just fake. FAKE FAKE FAKE. First question; how can a dead person text?? Think about it. It does not add up. Second question; Why did David Rebordão create a movie based on that? David knew that all of these ghost are FAKE FAKE. David wont tell you this. Dont believe in this. It's fake...

Unknown says:

Unl T July 17, 2016 at 4:19 AM Reply

Dumb ass

amanda murphy says:

Tuly 17, 2016 at 11:56 AM Reply

The images are from a film called a curva. The girl is an actress she is not dead. It was just a publicity stunt by the producer. Though not that good as nobody watched his crap film

Nahla says:

Of course it's fake, look at one of the photos, why would she wear a flapper dress (1920's) in the eighties?

Nahla says:

July 19, 2016 at 10:05 AM Reply

Of course it's fake, look at one of the photos, why would she wear a flapper dress (1920's) in the eighties?

Alice Miller says:

Our custom writing service are for everyone http://www.buy-essay-online.com/ and we never compromise on quality over cheap quality content.

Unknown says:

Everybody knows that ghoost cant be capture in the lens n dont be fool people this is just a fake dont believe in such things yes it can be true that the lady is dead bt dont make it biger things to earn money

Unknown says:

lol fake...i was initially creeped out. The last pic made me more confident that its fake...no such ghosts...boo at those people making such stupid and unnecessary thoughts trying to condition our reflexes in terms of fear!

Unknown says:

I came up to this because I don't want my family to suffer and sometimes this kind of things go real. God help me ��

chocopie says:

cho m July 23, 2016 at 5:30 AM Reply

I came up to this because I don't want my family to suffer and sometimes this kind of things go real.

God help me

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Cops Find Terminator Cutout When Responding To Gunman Reports

huffingtonpost.com

He said he'd be back.

08/05/2016 06:06 am ET Lee Moran Trends Editor, The Huffington Post

A life-sized cutout of the Terminator proved frighteningly realistic in Canada.

Police in Toronto issued a warning on Twitter Wednesday night after receiving reports of a man walking around the downtown area with a gun.

But the alert was updated just eight minutes later, after officers discovered it was in fact a cardboard replica of Arnold Schwarzenegger's character from the hit movie franchise.

Toronto's Police Operations Center showed the team had a sense of humor over the incident by adding the hashtag #IIIBeBack to the post, a reference to the cyborg assassin's most famous catchphrase.

The Huffington Post has reached out for further information on why the cutout was out on the street and to whom it belonged.

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Terror swan sinks £15,000 model boats and beats up ducks and geese metro.co.uk

This site uses cookies. By continuing, your consent is assumed. Learn more Richard Hartley-Parkinson for Metro.co.ukThursday 21 Jul 2016 8:25 am



Terror swan sinks £15,000 model boats and beats up ducks and geese

One of the attacks was caught on camera (Picture: Archant)

A psycho swan has caused thousands of pounds worth of damage and is bullying other birds on a lake in Suffolk.

The swan smashed up eight model boats at Needham Lake and started attacking ducks and geese that got too close.

And now the swan is threatening to harm avian/human relations with the local boating club.

Dean Cable, 23, has written to the Queen asking for

her to take action after two of his boats were attacked.

He said: 'I wrote to the Queen telling her the swan is a menace and I would like him to be moved on if possible.

'I said usually I like swans, but this one was attacking our boats and I would like to be able to boat in peace.



A THUG mute swan has smashed up EIGHT model boats worth up to £15,000 each on a popular lake...The fire-spitting aggressive male bird has carried out a stunning reign of terror at the tourist hotspot over the last few weeks...And the powerful beast has even beaten up ducks and geese who have dared to move in on his stretch of water at Needham Lake, near Needham Market, Suffolk...Sinking fast - one of the swan's victims goes to the bottom.

Model boats are worth up to £15,000 each (Picture: Archant)

'I told her the geese have no problem with us, the ducks seem to enjoy it and the swans we used to have at the lake were not a problem,' he said.

'One duck even hopped onto a barge for a ride. It is just this swan that is a problem and I want to see him moved elsewhere.

'I had one of my boats valued a month ago and I can tell you I don't want that swan in the water at the same time as my boat.'

Over the last few weeks the mute swan

has attacked eight boats as it protects its four cygnets.

Club secretary Neil Hodson said: 'He's attacked eight boats so far. They have all been recovered, some only just, but they suffer serious damage.

'He has been known to take off and fly to attack a boat. It is supposed to be a relaxing hobby.

'But if you are scared your pride and joy will be smashed it is not so relaxing.'

But a Mid Suffolk council spokesman said: 'Mid Suffolk was aware of reports of an 'aggressive' swan at Needham Lake earlier in the year.

'While we want everyone to enjoy the lake and the facilities it has to offer, we need to remind people that sometimes wild animals act in a manner that seems aggressive to people.

'Especially if people get too close while the birds are protecting their young.'

MetroUK

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Tesco responds to dead worm in a cucumber with a new version of Wonderwall

metro.co.uk

Man finds dead worm in Tesco cucumber so gives it a funeral

Simon Robb for Metro.co.ukMonday 8 Aug 2016 11:36 am



Tesco responds to dead worm in a cucumber with a new version of Wonderwall

William the worm was given the best possible send off (Picture: Facebook/Wes Metcalfe)

A man who found a flat worm in his Tesco cucumber has honoured its short life with an epic funeral.

And, as a sign of respect, the supermarket giant offered its condolences with a fitting poem tribute – aww!

This is obviously a tongue-in-cheek response to finding a lifeless garden critter in packaged food, but let's roll with it.

Wes Metcalfe picked up a shrink-wrapped cucumber at Tesco to make a cucumber sandwich.

But upon opening the bag he found a small worm inside.

Instead of freaking out, he decided to welcome the worm into his family with open arms and even named it William.

However, shortly after introducing it to his three kids he realised the worm was very unresponsive and looked a little... let's say on the flat side.

In a Facebook post to Tesco, he wrote: 'Our new pet appeared to be very unresponsive, we just put it down to him being sleepy and decided to give him sometime to come round.

'24 hours later and William still hasn't moved, on closer inspection he seems quite flat.'

So to give William the send off he deserved, Wes organised a funeral with a makeshift cross, a framed picture of the worm, and a deepest sympathies card in the style of a Tesco value product.

And to make the service all the more special, Tesco took the time to write a beautiful poem to celebrate Will's life, calling it 'our wonder worm'.

It's basically Oasis' Wonderwall with a wormy twist, but it's the thought that counts.

It is not clear if Wes was compensated for the cucumber, but Tesco has certainly stepped in to help him through the difficult mourning period.

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Tesco worm

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The Cutter's Art: A Brief History of Bloodletting

thechirurgeonsapprentice.com

Jul28 by The Chirurgeon's Apprentice



V0011195 An ill man who is being bled by his doctor. Coloured etching

When King Charles II suffered a sudden seizure on the morning of 2 February 1685, his personal physician had just the remedy. He quickly slashed open a vein in the king's left arm and filled a basin with the royal blood. Over the next few days, the king was tortured by a swarm of physicians buzzing around his bedside. They gave enemas and urged him to drink various potions, including boiled spirits from a human skull. The monarch was bled a second time before he lapsed into a coma. He never awoke.

Even without his doctors' ministrations, the king may well have succumbed to whatever ailed him, yet his final days were certainly not made any easier by the relentless bloodletting and purging. By the time of Charles II's death, however, bloodletting was standard medical practice.

Bloodletting dates back to the Roman physician, Galen, who lived in the 2nd century AD. Galen taught that blood was the product of food. After reaching the stomach, food was liquefied and then sent to the liver, where it was turned into blood. Occasionally, the body produced an excess of blood, which according to

Galenic practitioners, caused fevers, headaches, and even seizures. The only recourse was to rid the body of this superfluous fluid.



Barber

As vital as bloodletting was felt to be, many physicians believed the "cutter's art" was beneath their station. Instead, they referred those in need of bleeding to barber-surgeons, who carried out this duty in addition to a diverse range of other personal services.

The traditional striped barber's pole harks back to that era, when it served as an advertisement for their proficiency as bloodletters. The pole represents the rod that the patient gripped to make their veins bulge, and the brass ball at the top symbolizes the basin used to collect the blood. The red and white stripes represent the bloodied bandages. Once washed and hung to dry on the rod outside the shop, they would twist in the wind, forming the familiar spiral pattern adorning modern poles.

While bloodletting seems barbaric to modern eyes, it was considered a standard part of medical treatment, demanded by many people when they felt ill in the same way we might ask for antibiotics when visiting the doctor's office today. Take George Washington (below), who woke on the morning of 14 December 1799 complaining that he couldn't breathe. Fearing his doctor would not arrive in time, Washington asked for the overseer of his slaves

to step in and bleed him. The cut was deep, and Washington lost nearly half a pint before the wound was closed. Eventually, the physicians arrived and proceeded to bleed Washington four more times in the next eight hours. By evening, America's first president was dead. One of his physicians, James Craik, later admitted that he thought the blood loss was partly responsible.

Bloodletting reached its apogee in the early 19th century. By then, people were not just bled when they were ill. It was also used for preventative purposes, typically in the spring, seen as a time of rebirth and rejuvenation. During this period, leeching was the preferred method. This type of worm can suck several times its own body weight in blood and is a lot safer than cutting open a vein. Leeching became so popular that it led to a "leech craze." Throughout England, leech collectors (mostly women) would wade into leech-infested ponds with bare legs in order to attract the slimy bloodsuckers. Once the leeches had had their fill, they would fall off leaving the collector to then sell them to medical practitioners for profit.

Unsurprisingly, leech collectors commonly suffered from headaches as a result blood-loss, and sometimes contracted diseases from contact with the leeches

But why did bloodletting remain so popular for so long? Despite advances in anatomy and diagnostics during the 18th and 19th centuries, therapeutics did not evolve quickly enough to match new understandings of the







L0057148 Pewter box for transporting leeches, Europe, 1801-1900

body. Many practitioners believed it was better to do something than to do nothing.

In the cases of Charles II and George Washington, they were most definitely wrong.

One comment on "The Cutter's Art: A Brief History of Bloodletting



1. coldhandboyack says: July 28, 2016 at 5:57 PM

Great job for a fictional character; leech collector.

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The Devil Heads atlasobscura.com



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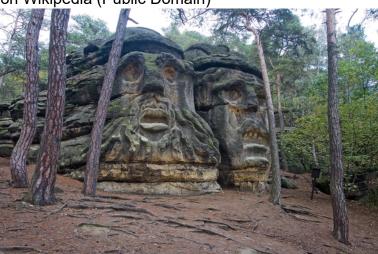
Želízy, Czech Republic

The Devil Heads

Two monstrous faces loom over a village in the Czech Republic



Portrait of Vaclav Levi, sculptor of monsters. Jan Vilímek on Wikipedia (Public Domain)



The Devil's Heads Wikipedia (Creative Commons)



An artist's depiction of the sculptures. Jedudedek on Wikipedia (Public Domain)



The Devil's Heads Richenza on Wikipedia (Creative Commons)

A disturbing sight awaits hikers exploring the forest above the village of Zelizy in the Czech Republic —two enormous demonic faces carved from the native stone stare back with empty eyes.

Added by vanessalpalumbo

Created by Vaclav Levy in the mid 1800s, the nearly 30 foot tall stone heads are known locally as *Certovy Hlavy* or the "The Devil Heads" and have been a local attraction for generations. Other carvings by the artist including artificial caves and scenes inspired by fairy tales adorn other nearby rock faces.

Now suffering slightly from the ravages of time and weather, the faces have grown less distinct over time, but no less disturbing.

Know Before You Go

can see it from the street

Sources

- http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%8Certovy_hlavy
- http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/V%C3%A1clav_Lev%C3%BD

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This secret society says it can help you attain wealth and power but they'll cost you

latimes.com 2016-08-12



Wealth and power **Getty Images** The secrets to success could be yours, says "the most exclusive, privileged and powerful organization that has ever existed."

The 10-page recruitment letter recently sent to Charles Snook made clear that he was wanted by a mysterious and elite organization called the League.

"We know a great deal about you," the letter said. "You'd be surprised at how much we know."

The League hadn't reached out before, it said, because Snook wasn't ready to learn all that the League could teach him about attaining wealth and power. That's changed.

"You're no longer judgmental or negative," the letter said. "You're no longer feeling sorry for yourself."

He's also no longer alive.

Snook died in a Pennsylvania nursing home almost a year ago at the age of 98.

"I wouldn't say my father was a mover and shaker," Snook's son, Greg, told me. "He made a modest living with a photography studio. He took people's high school photographs."

In other words, he was perhaps not the first candidate you'd think of for a secret society touting itself as "the most exclusive, privileged and powerful organization that has ever existed." The letter was unsigned, but the sender said he or she was "one of the most famous people in the world."

"I don't mean to brag," the sender bragged, "but I have all the wealth, power, sex and authority that I will ever need."

Before we go any farther, two questions.

A snail-mail pitch? That's so 20th century.

And who believes this sort of thing?

"Lots of people," answered Stephen Greenspan, a psychologist and author of "Annals of Gullibility: Why We Get Duped and How to Avoid It."

He said that even when it should be obvious something appears too good to be true, people often suppress common sense in favor of believing their good fortune will be the exception. "Gullibility is part of human nature," Greenspan said. "It's part of human nature to be trusting."

I'm not saying the League is a total scam. It's entirely possible that some people gain valuable tips and insights from the thing.

In any case, this wasn't my first brush with these guys. Several years ago, I wrote about a nearidentical letter making the rounds from what was then called the Society.

A fresh look seems warranted since they're once again courting the unwary with promises of free information that, the letter promises, "is not a joke, a gimmick, a hoax, a come-on or a con job," which should immediately raise suspicion that it's all those things.

The fact that a dead man has been "on our radar for quite some time" also makes one question the veracity of the League's outreach efforts.

"That happens sometimes," acknowledged Mark Hamilton, who I reached on his cellphone at a coffee shop near his home in Henderson, Nev. "It's inevitable."

Hamilton, 57, runs Integrated Management Associates, which does business as NeoThink and Neo-Tech Publishing, which send out the League and Society letters.

He's the son of Frank R. Wallace, a.k.a. Wallace Ward, a chemist and professional poker player who, Hamilton said, read Ayn Rand's "Atlas Shrugged" and concocted his own libertarian/objectivist philosophy, dubbed Neo-Tech.

Wallace was convicted of income tax evasion in 1997. He died in 2006 at age 73.

Hamilton said his endeavors, called NeoThink, represent ways his father's philosophy can be applied to the real world. For example, time management.

"Deadlines really enhance one's productivity," Hamilton explained. "They make you more efficient and focused." That insight led to development of what he calls the "mini-day system" and the "division of essence."

There's undoubtedly more to NeoThink than that. To be honest, I haven't read any of Hamilton's books, which are the bread and butter of Integrated Management Associates.

It works like this: People receive the 10-page recruitment letter. Those sufficiently intrigued (or flattered) by the overture return an enclosed membership certificate, which results in their receiving a 56-page pamphlet that includes hints of the NeoThink information available in Hamilton's books.

To go any deeper requires a significant financial investment.

The first book in the NeoThink series — all 1,200 pages of it — sells for \$135.50, Hamilton said. Most of the remaining nine volumes in the set sell for \$99.95 apiece, except for one 3,000-page tome that goes for \$300.

Hamilton bristled when I suggested that, whatever the value of his books, his sales pitch might be a tad misleading. He countered with what could be called the Lucky Charms defense.

"I've seen cereal commercials with a leprechaun running around chasing a rabbit," Hamilton said. "It's obviously fantasy. Everyone knows there are no leprechauns chasing rabbits.

"If I show you a bowl of cereal and say it tastes good, people won't buy it. You need the leprechaun."

The League letter is the leprechaun. The books are the vitamin-fortified combination of frosted oats and colored marshmallow bits.

Hamilton also wanted me to know that "there is a very dangerous philosophy permeating the country that business, and making a profit, is somehow wrong and very bad."

"All the values we have, they could not exist if someone, somewhere wasn't making money," he said. "The only way values exist is from someone making a profit."

I seem to recall reading something along those lines in "Atlas Shrugged" or "The Fountainhead." Admittedly, I once viewed selfishness and self-interest as virtues. Then I stopped being a teenager.

If nothing else, Hamilton said the League and NeoThink "are not some made-up thing," and that selecting people worthy of League membership is "a very, very involved thing."

"By the time someone receives our letter, we've spent a lot of time and money determining what kind of person this is," he said. "We're looking for people who are looking for something searchers. It's a very involved process."

Snook's son had this to say:

"When they're sending a letter like this to a dead man, you get the sense that everything in there is probably nonsense."

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American Magic-Lantern Theater - Film History - Film History Began With The Magic-Lantern

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America's Only Authentic 1890's Magic-Lantern Shows

FILM HISTORY BEGAN WITH THE MAGIC-LANTERN

Beginning of the Movies Begins With The Magic-Lantern

Beginning of the Movies

The magic-lantern -- the first projector and one of the leading antecedants of the movies -- was invented in the 1650s, probably by a prominent Dutch scientist, Christiaan Huygens. It soon became a showman's instrument. By the end of the century, wandering lanternists were putting on small-scale shows in inns and castles, using a lantern lit with a feeble candle. Often these shows featured goblins and devils -- hence the name the "magic lantern."



The Beginnings of the Movies -- An early showman carries his magic-lantern and slides on his back.

By it's heyday at the end of the 19th and the early 20th, magic-lanterns were everywhere -- in homes, in churches, in fraternal lodges, in schools, in large-scale halls and theaters, and as a regular part of home and public entertainment. Lanterns came in all sizes and shapes, from toy lanterns for children, to those used in large halls -- huge brass-and-mahogany, double-lens machines lit with "limelight."

The limelight was created when oxygen and hydrogen were squirted on a piece of limestone which turned incandescent once the gases were lit, and produced a light as powerful as that in a modern movie projector. The lantern projected hand-colored slides on a full-sized screen.

The slides -- many of them animated or capable of exotic special effects -- changed every 30 seconds or so, and illustrated stories and songs and comedy, just as the movies would later. In America, the foremost magic-lantern artist for these purposes was Joseph Boggs Beale. (See below.) Most lantern performance, however, used photographic slides in "illustrated lectures."

As the slides were projected in an entertainment magic-lantern show, a live showman and musician provided the "soundtrack," and the audience joined in creating sound effects, playing horns and tambourines, and clapping, cheering, and booing, just as in the melodramatic theater of the day. This is the type of show we have re-created. "Illustrated lectures" were generally more restrained, but enormously popular, providing information about travel, science, social issues, etc. in a format that was dramatic and colorful.

Beginnings of the Movies:

The Fantastic Phantasmagorie -- Halloween

Though not the first such show, one of the best known of early horror shows was the Fantasmagorie (Phantasmagoria in English) -- the forerunner of our Halloween Show. It was produced by a Belgian, E'tienne Gaspard Robert, who called himself Robertson. At first Robertson simply gave scientific demonstrations with his lanterns. But upon discovering the French public's appetite for the macabre in the declining years of the Revolution, he opened an elaborate ghost show in Paris in 1799.



Beginnings of the Movies: The Phantasmagoria, One of Many Such Magic-Lantern Traveling Shows

Beginnings of the Movies: The audience reacts in delighted terror at the 1799 *Phantasmagoria* magic-lantern show in Paris -- the ancestor of today's Halloween horror movie, and our Halloween Show.

The *Phantasmagoria* was held in an old convent that was converted into a magic-lantern theater. Dark passages decorated with mysterious pictures and the bones of the dead led the audience to a catacomb hung with black velvet and lighted by a single lamp. The audience sat facing a screen behind which Robertson's magic-lanterns and assistants were hidden. He began by discussing "in scientific terms" the sensations created by thoughts of phantoms and witches.

Suddenly the lamp went out. Thunder roared and lightning flashed. Church bells tolled, the lightning and thunder increased, and a tiny figure -- half-human, half-demon -- appeared in the air, shimmering and ghostly. Gradually the figure seemed to approach, growing larger and larger, until suddenly it disappeared with a wail. Bats fluttered on the walls, ghosts and goblins groaned, skeletons came hurtling toward the audience.

Women who had come to the show fainted in terror. Bold men hid their eyes.

The show was a smash success -- the toast of Paris.

Robertson's performance was staged with the help of several magic lanterns and six assistants, all hidden behind the screen, on which the images were rear-projected. To make the images change size, Robertson used lanterns fitted with special self-focusing lenses, and mounted on large wheeled platforms. The lanterns could move backwards from the translucent screen, making the goblins and skeletons appear suddenly larger, as though they were moving toward the audience. Other images were projected on smoke, which make them swirl magically. Others were projected on the walls with hand-held lanterns, so that bats could flicker in the corners and dive-bomb the women's hair.

Robertson imitators were soon performing all over the continent, and throughout the coastal United States as well. The first *Phantasmagoria* show in America, in New York in 1803, was only four years after Robertson's show in Paris.

Half a century later the *Phantasmagoria* was still going strong. Joseph Boggs Beale, the man who would later become America's leading magic-lantern artist, saw a *Phantasmagoria* show as a young man in Philadelphia during the 1850s.

The *Phantasmagoria* intensified the tradition of ghost and goblin shows from the lantern's early days of the wandering showmen, and led to a whole genre of macabre magic-lantern slides. By the nineteenth century this genre was a standard part of the repertoire of the magic-lantern showman who traveled the country, playing in theaters great and small. Some of these bizarre slides showed terrifying figures of the underworld, some were "dissolving views" in which beauty was transmogrified into beast, and some were moving caricatures -- the first animated cartoons.



Beginnings of the Movies: The Ratcatcher, An Ever-Popular Part of Victorian Magic-Lantern Traveling Shows

Beginnings of the Movies: The *Ratcatcher* an animated comic slide, uses two pieces of moving glass.

The most popular of the animated cartoons was the notorious *Ratcatcher*. A man lay asleep, snoring vigorously, his jaw moving up and down as the audience made the sound effects. Suddenly a rat appeared, made a dash for his mouth, and was swallowed in a gulp. The audience -- in the midst of creating the snoring sound effects -- gulped, gasped, sputtered, and roared.

The magic-lantern shows that toured to theaters in the nineteenth century tended to be "variety bills" because "variety" cast a wide net, and because few lanternists could afford to purchase (or to cart) the equipment needed for several special shows. But lanternists often changed their featured

segments to fit the occasion, and no doubt the macabre genre was especially emphasized at Halloween, as that holiday gained popularity at the end of the century.



Beginnings of the Movies: A giant bedbug terrorizes a Victorian gentleman in one of the bizarre Halloween slides created by Joseph Boggs Beale.

The Halloween Magic-Lantern Show developed by the modern-day American Magic-Lantern Theater draws upon this long lantern tradition. It uses "front projection," an original 1890s "bi-unial" (two lens) magic-lantern, and antique slides hand-painted by Joseph Boggs Beale. The show features the popular spooky tales of the period, blending ghost stories like "Little Orphan Annie," horror tales like Poe's "The Raven," bizarre music hall songs like "Don't Swat Your Mother, It's Mean" and, of course, animated cartoons, . . . including the ever-disgusting, ever-hilarious Ratcatcher.

Beginnings of the Movies:

Christmas Magic-Lantern Shows

One of the most elaborate nineteenth century magic-lantern shows, and the one that was the forerunner of many Christmas magic-lantern shows to come, was that at the Royal Polytechnic Institute in London. The Polytechnic, the equivalent of our modern combination of science museum and IMAX theater, was a museum that contained a large theater specifically designed for elaborate magic-lantern productions.

From 1838 to 1876, the Polytechnic produced extraordinary shows that dazzled two generations. The shows used giant lanterns with slides that were sometimes two feet long. Over 900 "Polytechnic" slides were exquisitely painted by the specialist firm of Childe and Hill, and Childe's dissolving views and elaborate special effects were an important part of the shows' popularity. The program was changed regularly during the year and included battlefront reports of the current wars, and fairy tales such as Aladdin's Lamp. The highlight of the year was The Christmas Special, featuring (of course) Dickens' classics like "Gabriel Grubb."

The Christmas theme was also an obvious one for the lanternists who traveled from hall to hall in America during the nineteenth century. Often, as with Halloween, they would turn their

"variety show" into a "Christmas Show" by featuring Beale's illustrated sets of Christmas stories like "A Christmas Carol," or "The Little Match Girl" and illustrated Christmas carols.

The recreated *Victorian Christmas Show* of the American Magic-Lantern Theater is like the Polytechnic Show -- an entire show with a Christmas theme, using Beale's hand-painted slides and animated Christmas cartoons.

Beginnings of the Movies:

America's First Great Screen Artist, Joseph Boggs Beale

As a young man in the 1850's, Beale himself attended several specifically "Christmas" magic-lantern shows in Philadelphia church halls, but he also commented on one generic show that he saw in December, 1860. The show was a actually a travelogue, a format which was to become one of the most popular kinds of illustrated lecture, and which made full use of the new limelight "stereopticon" (double lantern) technology and the newly developed process of transferring photographic images to glass slides:



Beginnings of the Movies. A nineteenth century magiclantern show, using the "stereopticon" (double lens) magic-lantern, lit with limelight.

This evening Pa, Ma, Aunt Harriet Cox, Aunty Boggs, Steve, Louey, & I went to Concert Hall to the "Stereopticon," a new exhibition, a little like [the old] magic lantern but much more powerfully lighted. The pictures are all taken from nature & are transparent photographs on glass, & are pictures for the stereoscope. By this new instrument they are thrown on a large canvas containing 600 square feet. The pictures are from all parts of the world, especially Europe, & some are shown much larger than reality; so that they appear on most too grand a scale; such as ladies & gentlemen, 10 feet high, looking at Niagara falls. The Hall was crowded, & the audience seemed to be very much pleased, & gave extra applause when familiar places were shown. . . .

Later in his life, Beale created a vast repertoire for the magic-lantern medium--of 250 illustrated stories, songs, history lessons, and fraternal rituals. His work was part of his publisher's effort to make great literature, history, and religion available on screen to a wide audience, a project that continued from about 1881-1915. (This opus, more than 2,000 slides, forms the core of The American Magic-Lantern Theater's shows, and allows it to produce a Repertoire of ten different full-length productions performed around America and the world. (See Schedule.)



Joseph Boggs Beale, America's First Great Screen Artist

Joseph Boggs Beale (1841-1926), America's First Great Screen Artist.

The genius of Beale's slides is partly in the way each slide advances the story plot, providing a new, dramatic, "action image." But supporting this central image are also details in the picture that reinforce lines from the story. As the showman dramatizes the action, the eye of the viewer moves within the picture, picking up details as they are mentioned, becoming like a latter-day movie camera, zooming in here, panning there, building texture toward the next dramatic moment.



Beginnings of the Movies: One of a set of slides for "The Night Before Christmas," drawn by Joseph Boggs Beale. Note the combination of story-telling "action image" and attention-holding detail.

This proto-cinematic effect is heightened by sequences of slides that not only track the action, but move the "camera angle" or point of view, shifting perspective to emphasize psychological points. Dissolving images, close-ups, fades, cross-editing of story-lines, etc. are all part of Beale's artistic repertoire for telling stories on screen. It is no wonder that his slides became the most popular in the country, and were reproduced in the millions for home and professional use.

The Beginning of the Movies:

Flexible Film, Successful Stories.

But for all Beale's skill, he could not compete with the movies, once its producers stopped simply demonstrating the medium's novelty, and began using it as the magic-lantern was used -- to tell stories. With the advent around 1905 of both a successful movie thriller, "The Great Train Robbery," and inexpensive movie "nickelodeon" theaters, the magic-lantern quickly declined as an entertainment medium, relegated to illustrating the songs sung between the reels of the early movie features, or as a single act in vaudeville shows, and to educational functions.

The child, the movies, had killed the parent, for the magic-lantern was truly the "father of film," -- providing not only the basic optical projector, but a vast artistic repertoire of onscreen visual story-telling techniques, as well as a time-tested repertoire of story content for the early movies.

Only in recent years has the magic-lantern show returned, with recreated shows like those of The American Magic-Lantern Theater. Modern audiences are of course accustomed to the elaborate special effects of today's movies and videos and computer games. But they seem to have no trouble slipping back into the magic-lantern show's combination of live drama, live music, and on-screen image; its interplay of performers and audience; its noisy group participation. At a time when people are reaching back to the past in order to find meaning for the present, the spirit of the magic-lantern show meets a modern need, and lives again.

Don't forget to sign up below to receive information about the publication of *Cinema Before Film*!

For the story of the Borton Family's personal magic-lantern history, click here.

This article about the beginning of the movies is adapted from the book, <u>Cinema Before Film: Victorian Magic Lantern Shows and America's First Great Screen Artist, Joseph Boggs Beale</u> by Terry Borton, © 2007, in process. The book will show how the artistic techniques of Joseph Boggs Beale, America's foremost magic-lantern illustrator, presaged the art of film. This historical analysis will be combined with Terry's lively accounts of modern audiences reacting to Beale's story slide sets in the shows of The American Magic Lantern Theater. The book is intended to be heavily illustrated and easily accessible, but to provide a great deal of new information, especially about Beale. A second reference book for scholars, <u>Before the Movies</u>, is just being completed. **To request publication notices**, see the bottom of this page.

This article first appeared as "Traditional Holiday Magic Lantern Shows," published in the bulletin of The League of Historic American Theaters, Nov. 1998.

Last Update: 8/20/15 11:20 Web Author: POW·R·PC

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By strangeremains on August 8, 2016 • 0



Photo of Jack Parsons from a 1938 edition of the LA Times. Parsons pictured w/the replica bomb he built for the Kynette trial. Image from Wikipedia.

Although the Suicide Squad is best known today as a movie about a fictional group of supervillains drafted by the government to undertake dangerous missions in exchange for commuted sentences, there was a real-life Suicide Squad at Caltech in the 1940's. As I read about the original Suicide Squad, I became fascinated with the life and death of its strangest member, Jack Parsons.

Jack Parsons (2 October 1914-17 June 1952) was an explosives aficionado who worked at the rocketry research lab at Caltech, who also helped establish Aerojet and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). Parsons' devised rocket fuels that were the

predecessors for the fuel that powered the NASA space shuttles, and made advancements in rocket propulsion, or jet propulsion, at a time when rockets were more likely to be written about in science fiction novels than studied at any university.1 During his short life he also testified as a forensic explosives expert, was deeply involved in occult magic, tried to conceive a supernatural child through a series of sex Magick rituals, and befriended L. Ron Hubbard.

In 1952, Parsons died at the young age of 37 from fatal injuries he suffered from an explosion at his home laboratory. Although officially deemed an accident, some believed the explosion could have been set on purpose, either by Parsons to end his life or by an unknown assassin.3,9

Marvel Whiteside Parsons, better known as Jack Parsons, was born to a wealthy Pasadena family in 1914. He tried to pursue his interest in rockets after high school by attending Pasadena Junior College and Stanford University but he had to drop out when his family fell on hard financial times.

Parsons didn't let the lack of a formal education stop him from pursuing his dreams. He and his friend from high school, Ed Forman, tested homemade rocket engines powered by gunpowder.1 Parsons would mix the fuels for the rockets and Forman would build the engines. When they decided to build a more difficult liquid propellant rocket motor, Parsons and Forman looked to a local university for help.2

They attended a seminar on rocket-powered aircraft in 1935 at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), one of the few universities where students could study rocket engineering. Parsons and Forman were put in touch with a PhD student named Frank Malina, who was writing a thesis on rocket propulsion.2 Theodore von Kármán, the director at Guggenheim Aeronautical Laboratory (GALCIT) at Caltech, let Parsons, Forman, and Malina work on their projects in the GALCIT lab. Then in 1936 Malina created a degree program for which they were to build a rocket that could be fueled by solid or liquid propellants.2 From then on the trio was formally known as the GALCIT Rocket Research Project.



The Suicide Squad in the Arroyo Seco, November 1936. Left foreground to right: Rudolph Schott, Amo Smith, Frank Malina, Ed Forman, and Jack Parsons. Image from Wikipedia.

Parsons scouted locations to test their rockets and was reportedly drawn to the sinister energy of the Devil's Gate Gorge, which got its name from a rock face in the canyon that resembles a profile of a horned demon.7 The Devil's Gate Gorge was located at the narrowest part of the Arroyo Secco Canyon near the site of a dam, about a quarter mile from the Caltech campus. The GALCIT Rocket Research Project conducted its first test in Devil's Gate Gorge on October 29, 1936.2



The Devil's Gate at the Arroyo Seco River. The "devil's profile" can been seen in the rock to the right.

After a series of tests in the gorge, and no one was hurt or killed, von Kármán granted the GALCIT Rocket Research Project access to testing facilities on the Caltech campus. The rocketry group was notorious at Caltech because their experiments often resulted in damage to campus

property. During one test a leaky valve spewed a caustic liquid all over the campus lawn and turned it brown. After another experiment, a motor misfired and emitted a gas in the laboratory that rusted all of the equipment.2 During another test a piece of equipment was hurled across the lab and was embedded into a wall. The members of the GALCIT Rocket Research Project became infamous for their perceived collective death wish so their fellow students referred to them as the Suicide Squad. Soon the Suicide Squad was forced to return to the Devil's Gate Gorge to protect the students and the campus.10



Photo from the LA Times (1938) of Jack Parsons with

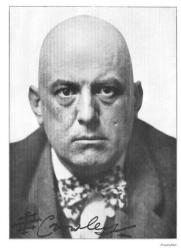
The Suicide Squad didn't get funding for the first few years of its work. In order to make extra money Parsons testified as a forensics explosives expert witness. His most well-known forensics work was for the trial of Captain Earl Kynette in 1938. In the late 1930's, a private investigator, and former LAPD detective, named Harry Raymond investigated corruption within the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and city government. Some powerful people were scared of what Raymond's inquiries would reveal and decided to stop him at all costs.

On January 14, 1938 Raymond was injured by a car bomb that had been planted under his car. Captain Earl Kynette was the prime suspect and stood trial for attempted murder. Parsons was hired to construct a replica bomb and deduce the explosives used to ignite it. He successfully reconstructed the bomb and the resulting explosion. Kynette was found the replica pipe bomb used in guilty and shipped to San Quentin. Parsons expert testimony is largely

the Kynette Trial. Image from credited with the resulting guilty verdict.3 Wikipedia.

In 1939, the Suicide Squad received its first funding from the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), and the military. As World War II started to ramp up, Parsons and the Suicide Squad were tapped by the US Air Corps to design and manufacture Jet-Assisted take Off (JATO) engines and formulate stable solid rocket fuels that could be stored for a long time.4

The GALCIT Rocket Research Project eventually branched off into two entities to handle production and research. Aerojet was established in 1941 to fulfill the engine orders for the government and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) was started in 1943 for rocket engine research and development.1



The "wickedest man in the world" Aleister Crowley. Image from Wikipedia.

Parsons life changed when he attended a Gnostic Mass hosted by an occult group called the Church of Thelema in 1939. Thelema was a religion and philosophy founded by Aleister Crowley, an infamous English occultist. Thelema's dominant principle was "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law." 1 Jack Parsons was attracted to the occult because, like his rockets, he believed magic challenged the physical limits of the world and could be used as a tool to explore "unseen metaphysical worlds." 1 Parsons joined the California branch of the Thelemite group, known as the Agape Lodge, and immersed himself in the Thelema's occult "Magick." 1 Crowley changed the spelling to Magick in order to distinguish his occult practice from stage magic because it was meant to be "the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will."

Parsons used the money he earned from Aerojet to lease a house in Pasadena's Millionaire's Row, which he called the "Parsonage." 1 The

Thelamite Agape Lodge relocated to the "Parsonage" and Jack rented rooms to artists, writers, and social misfits.

Jack parted ways with Aerojet around the end of World War II. Parsons believed that there wasn't much business for rocketry after the war and Aerojet was eager to separate itself from Parsons' weird personal life.5,6 In 1944 Parsons sold his Aerojet stock for \$50,000 and purchased the lease on the Parsonage.6

In 1945 Jack met and befriended a young sci-fi writer named L. Ron Hubbard, who would eventually found the Church of Scientology. From January to March of 1946 Parsons and Hubbard conducted a series of sex magick rituals, called the Babalon Working, that were meant to conceive and incarnate the Thelemite goddess, Babalon. 6

After Parsons and Hubbard completed the Babalon Working, Hubbard ran off with Jack's girlfriend. Jack wouldn't be heartbroken for long.

In February of 1946, Parsons meet a new Parsonage resident named Marjorie Cameron, who he believed was sent to him to help him conceive the goddess Babalon in human form. Jack and Marjorie were married on October 19, 1946.

In 1949 Parsons started work with the Hughes Aircraft Company to design and construct a chemical plant. The next year, Hughes reported some confidential documents missing that were related to its

rocket program. After an investigation by the FBI, investigators suspected that Parsons was involved with the theft and had planned to submit the files to the Israeli government in return for a job.7 Parsons was fired from Hughes, his security clearance was revoked, and he was permanently banned from working on classified projects. The only reason he was not arrested for espionage was that the documents were not considered state secrets.6

For the next few years Jack had to work odd jobs, some of which involved mixing explosives in his home lab. On June 17th, 1952 Parsons was mixing and packing explosives for a trip to Mexico when a blast ripped through Parson's Pasadena home.

When police arrived at the house, they found Jack on the floor surrounded by rocket propulsion notes and occult drawings. He was missing half of his face and most of his right arm. There is some discrepancy regarding his last words. According to one source, his last words were, "I wasn't done." And another source recounts them as "Who will take care of me now." 6 About an hour later Jack Parsons was dead.



Pasadena Police Department officer Ernie Howard at the scene of the explosion that killed John Whiteside "Jack" Parsons. Image from Wikipedia

The detectives investigating Jack's death found that the blast occurred as the result of an accident when Jack dropped bottle of explosive material. 8 Despite this decision, rumors of suicide and assassination and persisted among his friends, family, and the community.3 Some of his former housemates believed he could have committed because he was depressed due to the downward spiral of his career or personal life.3 Others thought he might have been assassinated by the LAPD for his role in convicting their brother in blue, Captain Earl Kynette.3,9 This tragedy was compounded when Jack's mother, Ruth Parsons, committed suicide by overdosing on sleeping medication within hours of Jack's death.

Today Aerojet is known as Aerojet Rocketdyne and is a manufacturer of rocket and missile propulsion systems. And JPL is managed by Caltech for NASA and is located near the Devil's Gate Gorge where the Suicide Squad did their initial tests.

Jack Parsons is regarded as one of the fathers of rocketry because of his innovations in rocket engineering and early support of space exploration.

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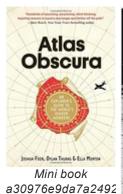
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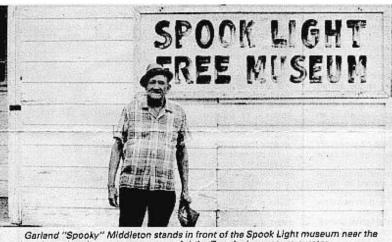
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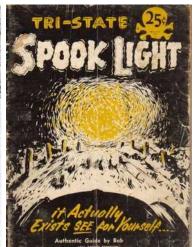
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The Ozark Spooklight

atlasobscura.com











Known variously as the Ozark Spook Light, the Hornet Ghost Light, the Joplin Ghost Light, the Devil's Jack-O'-Lantern, and the Tri-State Spook Light it is, like the many other "will-owisps" lights, a mysterious glowing

orb that has appeared regularly on this back road since approximately 1881, though some say it has been spotted by natives long before then.

No one knows for sure what it is, but some possible explanations are escaping natural gas, and a luminescence created by rotting organic matter. The most likely explanation, one that fits with many of the mysterious lights seen around the world, is also the most straightforward: reflected car lights which can only be seen at a certain angle and area, the moving car making it seem as if the light is moving. Though in this case "the first "official" report appeared in 1881 in a publication called the Ozark Spook Light, long before cars were driving down the road.

There are as many rumors surrounding the Ozark spooklight as it has names. It is variously the torch of a beheaded Quapaw or Osage Indian, searching for his head, the spirits of a young Quapaw couple who were in love but forbidden to marry because the man did not have a large enough dowry and leapt into Spring River to their deaths, the spirit of a miner decapitated in a mining accident and carrying a lantern searching for his head, the spirit of a Confederate sergeant killed by cannon fire who is searching for HIS head, or the spirit of a miner searching for his children kidnapped by Indians.

Though there used to be a Spooklight Musuem, it has since been shut down, though the building with the sign still remains on the road.

Know Before You Go

Spooklight Road is eleven miles southwest of Joplin, Missouri, just past the village of Hornet, in the area where Missouri borders Oklahoma and Kansas. The light is most commonly described as being visible from inside the Oklahoma border looking to the west

or

- Take Interstate 44 west of Joplin, Missouri and then take the Route 43 Exit and go south
- Turn onto Coyote Road (Right) off Route 43 and pass through Hornet
- Take another right onto Gum Road
- Take Left onto State Line Road
- Take the first Right to what is called "Spook Light Road"
- You'll likely see markings on the road where people park and watch for the light

This is only a four-mile stretch of road that extends into Oklahoma. At a dip in the road, park your vehicle. There will be a field on your right side, facing left. This is the best location and you should see a slight rise ahead of you to the west and a much steeper hill behind you. Be sure to park your vehicle as far to the side of the road as you can (we suggest turning around with your car facing back toward Missouri) and watch out for any oncoming cars. Be careful and stay on the road so that you are not trespassing.

Address

Joplin, Missouri, 64801 United States

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Elderly Woman Beats Off Would-Be Robber With Bacon

cbslocal.com



July 20, 2016 9:18 AM

Some are calling it a hambush.

In jolly old Manchester, England, police reported that an 86-year-old woman was ambushed after withdrawing a large amount of cash from an ATM.

And in a "tail" as old as time, someone tried to steal her money. Luckily, when the female thief grabbed for the woman's cash, she was armed and ready.

She had a packet of bacon she had just procured from the grocery store.

The intended victim grabbed her bacon, pummeling the would-be snatcher until she ran away like greased lightening. Turns out, bacon was extra bad for this assailant's health.

Police investigated, learning quickly that the smoking gun in this case was actually smoked meat.

The story was posted on the Manchester police Facebook page, bringing many word puns and apt comments like "Someone contact the Americans and let them know there is another way!" Doctors say bacon can put you in the hospital, apparently in this case it could also have landed someone in jail.

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Thieves rob bank in central Milan despite warnings from residents

Agence France-Presse in Rome Friday 12 August 2016 Last modified on Friday 12 August 2016

theguardian.com

Residents told bank they could hear tunnelling as early as last Monday, but thieves finished digging and emptied safe and deposit boxes



Police in central Milan, where four robbers managed to Matteo Bazzi/EPA

Police in Italy have been left embarrassed after thieves robbed a bank despite warnings from local residents that they could hear a tunnel being dug, according to media reports.

The four robbers dug the tunnel under a bank in central Milan, and once inside waited for the first employees to arrive before forcing them to open the safe and empty the safety deposit boxes.

dig a tunnel into a bank over several days. Photograph: Police arrived on the scene after the alarm went off, only to discover that the crooks had made their escape.

Local residents were quick to point out that they had warned the authorities something odd was going on underneath the building.

"We began hearing noises on Sunday evening. We were jokingly saying to each other, 'Are they robbing the bank?'," one unnamed resident was quoted as saying in the media.

"On Monday one of us went to the bank to warn them about the tremors we had felt. Others went to the nearest police station on Tuesday because the sounds had not stopped."

On Thursday, the night before the robbery, "even the pavement outside was shaking", they added.

The value of the theft was not immediately known.

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By Ben Hooper | Aug. 10, 2016 at 3:30 PM



A thirsty monkey enjoys the water bottles he stole from a tour group in Cambodia. Screenshot: JukinMedia

SIEM REAP, Cambodia, Aug. 10 (UPI) -- A tour guide in Cambodia shared video of a tourist's encounter with a clever monkey that ended up stealing a pair of water bottles.

The video, posted to YouTube by Sary's Siem Reap Tours, shows the

tour guide pull his vehicle over so his passengers can get a closer look at a monkey "hitchhiker" at the side of the road.

The monkey fearlessly approaches the vehicle and climbs on the front, grabbing a pair of water bottles from the driver's basket.

"Just one!" the driver says, but the monkey does not heed his words.

The thirsty simian then takes a seat to enjoy his ill-gotten beverages.

The monkey makes quick work of both water bottles before the tour guide drives away.

"My customers wanted to meet some of the famous monkeys of Siem Reap. We met up with a thirsty friend," the tour guide wrote.

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This scientist's death in the Alaska wilderness was a mystery; 150 years later, his skeleton helped solve it

adn.com

Alaska Dispatch News

Monday, August 15, 2016

This scientist's death in the Alaska wilderness was a mystery; 150 years later, his skeleton helped solve it

· Author: Sarah Kaplan, The Washington Post

• Updated: August 8 Published August 7



The skeleton of Robert Kennicott. (Smithsonian Institution)

The last anyone heard of Robert Kennicott was his cheerful hum as he strolled into the Alaska wilderness early on the morning of May 13, 1866.

It was good to hear the scientist sing. It had been a long and punishing winter at Fort Nulato, where Kennicott's expedition to map the Yukon had spent the last five months, and he bore the setbacks badly. The frigid cold and endless dark left no

time for exploration or research, a fact that rendered Kennicott "entirely broken down," a friend wrote.

This was not a young man used to failure. By age 30, Kennicott had become an accomplished explorer and celebrated naturalist for the Smithsonian Institution. He was bold, brilliant and fearless; someone who handled venomous snakes with his bare hands.

When Kennicott didn't return, his men began to worry. The expedition's engineer brought up a note their leader left for him that morning, which included instructions "in case of any accident happening to me."

A search party was hastily mobilized; rescuers fanned out across the bleak, mountainous landscape. Soon two of them arrived at the Yukon River, just south of the fort, where their worst fears were confirmed. Kennicott lay on his back on the muddy beach, his arms across his chest, his hat fallen on his face, his body completely still. He was dead.

Tenderly, the devastated men lifted their leader's body and began to carry it back to the fort. That's when they noticed something strange: The small vial of medicinal strychnine that Kennicott always carried with him was missing.

In 1866, whispers traveled faster than ships. By the time Kennicott's remains were returned to his family homestead in Illinois, called the Grove, eight months after his death, the rumor that Kennicott had killed himself with a fatal dose of the poison had already taken hold. What else could explain the death of a man seemingly in his prime of life?

"It was a question only Kennicott could answer," said Stephan Swanson, director of the Grove, which is now a National Historic Landmark. And Kennicott was gone.

But his remains, which had been buried in a cast iron coffin, were incredibly well-preserved. If the man couldn't solve the mystery of his death, perhaps his skeleton could.

Unearthing Kennicott

Today, Kennicott's bones are housed at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, just one of millions of research specimens the public rarely gets to see. NMNH has the world's largest natural history collection – 145.3 million objects that fill 1.32 million square feet of space.

To find Kennicott amid this vast assemblage, you must walk past the museum's famous elephant, through the throngs of tourists, up several flights of stairs and down a long hallway lined with drawers containing human skeletons, to the office of Kari Bruwelheide and Doug Owsley. They are forensic anthropologists – scientists who specialize in analyzing human remains to decipher how someone lived and died. They've famously assisted efforts to identify those killed in the Waco siege and the 9/11 attacks, as well as Civil War soldiers and early Jamestown inhabitants. And they're two of the world's foremost experts in excavations of cast iron coffins – the kind that Kennicott was buried in.

In the late 1990s, Swanson heard Owsley give a talk at a junior college near the Grove, in Glenview, Illinois. Swanson had idolized Kennicott for decades and was never entirely convinced by the rumors that the naturalist's death was a suicide.

"I thought, here's a Smithsonian scientist" - Kennicott - "who died on the banks of the Yukon River at 30 years old, there's all these theories out there about how he had died. And here's another Smithsonian scientist" -Owsley – "who could figure out the truth," Swanson recalled. "I went up to him after and explained, 'Hey, I have this interesting thing going on."

Neither Owsley nor Bruwelheide had heard of Kennicott before this. But their interest was piqued.

Serendipitously, Swanson was already arranging to have Kennicott's remains transferred from a nearby cemetery to the Grove - while the coffin was above ground, perhaps the Smithsonian scientists could take a look. Several years and hundreds of phone calls later, they found themselves inside a barn at the Grove, lifting the heavy lid of Kennicott's iron coffin to reveal the man inside.

"It was truly amazing," Bruwelheide remembered. "You could see his full set of clothing, you could see black, flowing hair, you could see how they prepared the body, all the way down to the socks on his feet that had holes in them, and you knew were the last pair of socks that he ever wore."

Cast iron coffins are sealed with a linseed and lead-based plaster that makes them airtight, and Owsley and Bruwelheide hoped that Kennicott's remains might have been perfectly preserved. But the glass plate on the front of the casket had broken, and the body inside was badly degraded. Adipocere, a grayish, waxy substance that forms from the decomposition of body tissue, pooled beneath the bones.

The scientists still had plenty to work with. Analyzing his hair, they could track deterioration in Kennicott's diet as he left the cushy confines of the Smithsonian Castle, where he lived with other scientists, for the deprivation of the Arctic. Herniations in his spine indicated the weight of the scientific instruments and collecting tools he lugged on his expeditions. Tests of the adipocere revealed traces of mercury, arsenic and strychnine - all of which are deadly.

But it was hard to tell whether the toxins in Kennicott's tissue came from a final, fatal swallow or had accumulated there over decades. Nineteenth-century naturalists frequently used arsenic for killing and storing specimens, and mercury and strychnine were commonly taken in small doses as medicine, a practice that would horrify doctors today.

"The human skeleton, if you know how to read it, you can read it like a book and it can tell you a great deal," Owsley said. "But sometimes it doesn't tell you everything."

The pieces of a life

While Owsley and Bruwelheide puzzled over Kennicott's body, Sandra Schlachtmeyer, a volunteer at NMNH and skilled archivist, pored over the facts of his life.

Journal entries, medical records and thousands of letters revealed the young man born to a well-connected Chicago-area family in 1835, when Illinois was still considered the wild outer edge of the young United States. As a child, Kennicott was often sickly and couldn't attend school, so he got most of his education on the grounds of the Grove, chasing after animals, investigating plants and charting the landscape around his home.

When he was 17, a friend of Kennicott's father introduced him to Spencer Fullerton Baird, who was then the assistant secretary of the newly established Smithsonian Institution.

"Baird recognized his passion and asked him to start contributing specimens to the Smithsonian," Owsley said, "since so many things in Illinois weren't known to Eastern scientists at the time."

Several years later, Baird invited Kennicott to come live at the Smithsonian Castle, which housed a number of other promising young scientists. By day, they studied under the institution's senior researchers, analyzing and cataloging specimens that went into the growing collection. But at night, the men went wild, hosting sack races in the exhibit hall and serenading the secretary's daughters when they were supposed to be asleep. They called themselves the "Megatherium Club" after a genus of extinct ground sloths – a jab at neighbors who complained that their late night high jinks made them sound like "wild beasts."

"Kennicott was a bright and shining light, and no voice was more cheery than his in these gatherings, where all restraint was thrown off after the labors of the day were over," his friends wrote in a eulogy published by Western Monthly magazine in 1870.

He was also – even Owsley almost blushes admitting this – quite handsome: tall and rangy, with thick, dark hair, soulful eyes and a swashbuckling way of carrying himself.

"Everyone says he should be played by Johnny Depp in the movie," he said.

But Kennicott was intensely serious about his work. "In zoology ... I mean to do big things," he wrote in a letter to a fellow naturalist. He spent all his summers in Illinois, where he captured and identified thousands of specimens. He helped found the Chicago Academy of Sciences - "the first museum of the West," he liked to boast.

In 1859, Baird asked Kennicott to lead a three-year expedition through British America (now Canada) up to Alaska to document the region's wildlife. He came back with 282 specimens of bird, 230 mammals, 151 fish, plus countless plants, insects and reptiles. He spoke with Native Americans he encountered and documented their languages in his journal, and purchased their clothing, tools and artwork for the museum in the District. By the end of the trip, he had contributed specimens to every division of the Smithsonian. And he was only 27.

The initial Alaska expedition was so successful that Baird recommended Kennicott to lead a second trip, this one for Western Union Telegraph, which hoped to find a route for a telegraph line that would link the United States to Russia beneath the Bering Sea.

The young man's health problems from childhood returned around this time: Letters show he was taking doses of strychnine to stave off headaches and feelings of sluggishness, and he suffered a moment of vertigo while visiting a colleague in Illinois. When he arrived in San Francisco, the last port of call before Alaska, he had a full on attack of syncope – a loss of consciousness due to low blood pressure. His heart had momentarily stopped beating.

By the spring of 1866, Bruwelheide said, "Kennicott was under great stress, he was probably exhausted from the pressure of leading this expedition. He had just suffered an extremely harsh winter where the men had very few supplies remaining and very little to eat. He believed he was not succeeding in the mission as he should have. ... You can imagine the circumstances coming together and just taxing his body."

In response, he started taking more strychnine – a dire clue.

"Sandy's research let us put the results of our analysis in context ... to figure out what they mean," she concluded. "It all started to come together."

The cause of death

Fifteen years after they first opened his coffin, and 150 years after he died, Bruwelheide and Owsley are finally ready to publish their diagnosis of the cause of Kennicott's death:

"The assembled profile strongly supports death from cardiac arrest," they write in a paper that will be printed in Cambridge University Press this year.

The health complaints described in Kennicott's letters are consistent with Long QT Syndrome, a congenital disease characterized by rapid, chaotic heart beats and fainting spells. Strychnine, which causes muscle convulsions, would have exacerbated the condition. The combination of stress, physical exhaustion and toxic "medicine" was too much for the young scientist's weak heart.

Yes, Kennicott may have poisoned himself. But it wasn't intentional. For Owsley and Bruwelheide, it was almost a relief to come to that conclusion.

"We work many different cases, but without question we've invested more time and effort in this young man than anyone I can think of," Owsley said. "We're scientists, we're always objective," but after all that time spent poring over his letters, immersing themselves in his life, "it is personal."

The anthropologists say they think of Kennicott as a colleague, and their museum is still reaping the benefits of his work. Several years ago, zoologists studying the decline of cricket frogs in Illinois used specimens collected by Kennicott to understand how the creatures have changed between the 19th century and today. The Smithsonian estimates that there are thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of Kennicott-collected objects still in the collection.

"And his contribution goes even farther than what tags read 'Kennicott,'" Bruwelheide noted. He coached many of the young naturalists and explorers who would shape science and the Smithsonian in the second half of the 19th century, including Henry Bannister, whose chronicle of Kennicott's expedition would be used to justify the purchase of Alaska. A glacier, a valley, a river and a town in Alaska all bear the name "Kennicott."

Looking over her notes, Bruwelheide pulled up a heartbroken letter biologist William Dall sent to his sister after learning of his mentor's death. The sheets were wrinkled and yellowed with age, but Dall's immaculate cursive was still easy to read.

"The spur which nerved me to face any danger, and look carelessly on difficulties and trials, by the side of one loved and trusted, is taken away," he wrote. Dall recalled how, just before his death, Kennicott told him that he was glad to have gone on this "unlucky expedition," if only because it allowed them to become friends.

"It was a great comfort to know he had confidence in me," Dall wrote. "I shall try and deserve it."

"This is what draws us to Kennicott," Bruwelheide said, reflecting on Dall's letter. " ... He was a great scientist, but an even greater mentor and friend to those who knew him."

As she spoke, Bruwelheide repeatedly glanced toward Kennicott's bones, which have been stained the color of dark leather by the iron coffin that once housed them. Under other circumstances, the human skeleton lying on the table might seem like a prop from a horror movie. But viewed through Bruwelheide's eyes, it's more like a relic of a saint.

Originally, Swanson intended for Kennicott's remains to be reburied at the Grove when Bruwelheide and Owsley's investigation was over. But when the anthropologists realized how important the young man had been to the Smithsonian, they asked if the museum could keep him as part of its 17,000-person-strong human anatomy collection. Swanson brought the request to the modern-day Kennicott family, who agreed.

This year, the bones were formally signed over to the Smithsonian. They're already being used for research on the effects of mercury-based dental fillings and to test the accuracy of facial reconstruction software.

"We think he would like that," Owsley said. "He's a collector who was collected."

COMMENTS

Nero Fiddled

8 days ago

A very well written and interesting article- a true Alaskan history/mystery. I always wondered who Kennicott was.

Chrissy Noel Grunzke

7 days ago

Nero, I couldn't agree more. A fascinating and informative read.

bycatch

8 days ago

"The spur which nerved me to face any danger, and look carelessly on difficulties and trials, by the side of one loved and trusted, is taken away,"

Why is it that we don't write so beautifully any more?

AHHA

7 days ago

The advent of the eraser and then the delete key and spell check have significantly dumbed down our willingness to think clearly and carefully about what is said as we write.

Kodiak Dude

7 days ago

Uh, no. Today's technology is only a tool used by the writer, as the pen was in days past. Writing style, word usage, and eloquence stem from the writer, not from the technology that writer uses. Scientists and explorers wrote journals almost religiously to keep track not only of their findings but also of their own feelings on the subject they delved into. If you look around today, you will still see many examples of beautifully written prose.

Roldán Belenos

7 days ago

In reply to:

"The spur which nerved me to face any danger, and look carelessly on difficulties and trials, by the side of one loved and trusted, is taken away," Why is it that we don't write so beautifully any...

bycatch

Were I e'er deigned to compose prose worthy of yesteryear's graces, I bemuse myself upon introspection of a century past to take up the erudition and bombast of that era like a mynah bird does a songstress. I am aided in the recognition that the education of yore concerned itself less with mathematics and the sciences and more with literature and the arts. Whereas I with my modern and urban education can intuitively understand electron shell theory and the calculation of integrals, neither of which serve me any quotidian purpose, my grandfather's youth was invested in reading and memorizing Shakespeare, Coleridge, Chaucer, and Longfellow. My dear ancestor quoted Poe with great gusto unto his death. Alas, my efforts of eloquence are but a shadow of once was.

bycatch

8 days ago

A most excellent piece of writing that fills a long living gap in history. Well done and thank you.

Chris Tadda

8 days ago

Thank You for a Very Well Written Piece of Alaskan History ~!

Obomba

8 days ago

For those who like this stuff the reading of exploration by allen, kastner, robertson, and glenn is excellent. You think your camping trip was ruined by rain? Read about these guys.

Bubba Cat

7 days ago

Oh my gosh, yes! Excellent book: "Lieutenant Castner's Alaskan Exploration, 1898". I especially like the part where they are starved and so weak they can't fight off the Natives at Salcha and so they prepare to die. (Not going to tell the rest, you have to read it!)

Jake Jacobson

8 days ago

This slice of history is certainly a refreshing departure from the run-on-the-mill political & current events stories.

Bubba Cat

8 days ago

Just a truly gripping story. Those men struggled and froze and worked through the coldest of cold and just would NOT give up until at last they had finished the ground work for the cable which would connect the world . They were worn out past what any of us today could withstand. They sent word to the people in the States saying that the job was finally finished. A response was received much later: Oh that project was written off and given up a long time ago. didn't you know that? How heart breaking that must have been! There are several books about it on the market or check your library.

Anchorat

7 days ago

Interesting piece of history. Love it. Those long,dark winters would gnaw on any man's sanity. Back then there was no flying off to the states for some wine, women and song. No tv, movies or laptops, lol. I don't know if there were paperbacks back then but I would be hoarding books if I could.

Roldán Belenos

7 days ago

Nor was there artificial lighting. When it got dark again after three hours, it was dark for another twenty-one. Any light to be had was from the moon or a fire, and light from a fire doesn't do a whole lot toward alleviating the psychological effects of prolonged darkness the way a house full of 60 and 100 watt light bulbs can.

Andi Taggart

7 days ago

Excellent. Kennicott was a man I'd like to know. They don't make 'em like him anymore! As our expeditions are now under the sea and up into space, we remember the first with reverence. Brave men, in a brave new world.

7 days ago

What a poetic story. It was an adventure to lose myself where the words vanished and his life played out a story that captured my imagination. It had action, it had drama, intrigue, and tragedy. But the man truly LIVED!

Trista Crass

7 days ago

This was so fascinating! I'd never heard of Kennicott, but now I'll be researching him. What a terrific story-I'm sure he'd be tickled to be interred at the Smithsonian~

Chuck Unsworth

7 days ago

Quality read. Great story and history here

wrangell86

7 days ago

well written thanks for telling his story

Boyd Spooner

7 days ago

"Dem bones"

snowyphile

1 day ago

The once-great copper mine is named for Robert Kennicott.

The Bears Spokesman

7 days ago

Thank you, Sarah Kaplan! A very interesting and wonderfully well written story. To bad American Historian Stephen E. Ambrose isn't still with us. This would be a great subject matter for him to biographer on. Like he did in the book Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West. I found it amazing how he took all those very tedious and boring Corps of Discovery journals. Turning them into one of the best books, I had ever read. Such a fascinating time period in our American history. I truly hope some great author picks this one up.

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Heroic tiger just manages to stop leopard attacking zookeeper

10:49, 15 Aug 2016 Updated 11:56, 15 Aug 2016 By Rachel Bishop

mirror.co.uk

Incredible moment zookeeper narrowly avoids getting mauled by leopard after heroic tiger leaps to his rescue



A zookeeper narrowly avoided getting mauled by a leopard after a heroic tiger leapt to his rescue.

Eduardo Serio was playing with a group of lions at the Black Jaguar White Tiger when the leopard began creeping up behind him.

The big cat, named Dharma, suddenly sprints towards the keeper - but he remains completely oblivious to the danger he is in.

But in seconds a tiger, named Aztlan, charges at Dharma and stops him in his

tracks.



The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation



The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation YouTube / The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation

The leopard is seen in the distance beginning to creep towards the keeper

But tiger Aztlan spots Dharma and begins to make his way towards him

As he wrestles him to the ground Dharma seems to roll onto his back into a submissive position - but Aztlan still gives him a tap, as if to be telling him off.

The dramatic clip, shot at the big cat zoo in Mexico City, was uploaded onto YouTube in October 2015 under the title "The Kids Playing. Aztlan Saved Me From Dharma's Attack."

Aztlan launches himself towards the leopard in a matter of seconds

Eduardo Serio appears entirely oblivious to what is going on behind him

The footage has gone viral recently after it was posted on Reddit.

Some people were sceptical the tiger was trying to save Serio though.

Mavin Marque wrote on YouTube: "Don't be fooled.

The footage has gone viral recently after it was posted on Reddit

Aztlan leaps into the air and attacks Dharma in the heroic rescue

"The big tiger named Aztlan did not purposefully save some human....he was more likely interested



The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation YouTube / The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation

"The stupid human is just lucky he was there to

in playing just as much as the leopard.

receive the play. This is why you don't treat these animals like small kitties.

The tiger wrestled Dharma to the ground, where he seems to roll onto his back into a submissive position

Aztlan gives the leopard a tap before he walks away as if to be telling him off

"They'll f**k you up just in play and you were stupid enough to crouch down with the other pack.

"Honestly, I kind wish it had happen just to prove an old point. Don't treat this large awesome animals like this and please, for f**k sake have more respect than this douche."

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The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation



The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation YouTube / The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation



The Black Jaguar White Tiger Foundation



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Married to a mammal stuff.co.nz

stuff LEIGHTON KEITH

Last updated 20:06, August 24 2016



Grant Matthew Tony Ratcliffe, who owned Whirling Bros Circus and is known as the Elephant Man, is in New Plymouth to talk to the local Grey Power group on Thursday about his life on the road.

Tony Ratcliffe has lost none of his passion for elephants or entertaining people ten years after leaving the circus life behind.

The 70-year-old was the former owner of Whirling Brothers circus which was New Zealand's last touring circus and the last in Australasia to have exotic animals before the big top came down for the final time in 2006.

Known as the Elephant Man, Ratcliffe bought the show's star attraction Jumbo, an African

elephant, as a baby from a zoo in Honolulu in 1975 but his passion for the massive mammals went back to when he was a young boy from Taumarunui and his grandmother took him to the zoo.

"I just couldn't believe the elephants, I was in awe of them and from then I just followed the elephants."

Ratcliffe was forced to leave the life he loved behind due to ill-health but remembers his dying father Ewan's last words to him.

"My dad said to me on his death bed to write a book and tell your story and let the people know about your passion for elephants."

The resulting book - *The Elephant Man - A Pictorial Autobiography of the Whirling Bros Circus*, tells of how Ratcliffe created Whirling Bros, and how he built it into New Zealand's biggest and longest-running national and international travelling show.

It was published in 2010 and Ratcliffe travels with his fourth wife Vicky on speaking engagements entertaining crowds with his colourful tales of life on the road and his 30 plus year relationship with Jumbo.

The couple will speak to the local Grey Power group, at 1.30pm on Thursday at the Lawry St church.

Ratcliffe said his talks were always well received by the crowds.

"People like to talk about the old times and the old circuses.

"The people really enjoy it, I talk about the funny side of life."

Ratcliffe has an endless supply of stories from his time touring and loves sharing them including one when four lions escaped during a show in Rotorua in 1985.

"Only me and my laundry man know how frightened I was," he joked.

The final lion to be caught was a large male and it was found walking along a veranda at a hospital.

"There was a geriatric guy, who hadn't walked for five years, he leapt out of his wheelchair and jumped through a window and then pulled it shut."

Ratcliffe's not the only one to vividly recall the day, shortly after he published his book, he was walking around Rotorua visiting bookstores with copies and decided to go onto the police station with a bundle under his arm.

"A police officer recognised me and said 'oh no not you again, don't tell me there's more lions on the loose'."

He said the officer bought all of the copies of the book he had on him.

Ratcliffe still thinks about Jumbo, who now lives at San Diego Zoo, and keeps in touch with her handler.

"With Jumbo it was like a marriage, she only had to knock and I would coming running. She meant so much to me, it just wasn't funny."

"It's good to know she's in such good hands."

- Stuff

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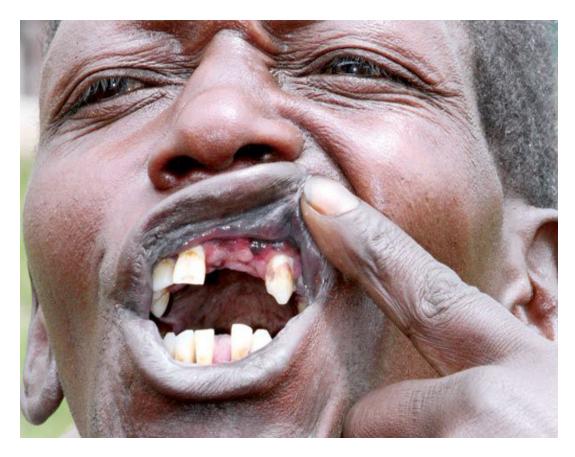
Panic as assailants target victims teeth



By Bernard Gitau

Date: June 24, 2016

http://www.mediamaxnetwork.co.ke/people-daily/230758/panic-as-assailants-target-victims-teeth/



Joel Maina. Photo/Raphael Munge

A mysterious gang in Molo has caused panic among residents over what has been described as cult-like activities that involve knocking out victim's teeth. The gang members are said to be only interested in teeth after it emerged that personal effects, including money and phones belonging to the victims are left intact after the attack. Reports say more than 10 people have been attacked in a similar manner.

Speaking to People Daily, Joel Maina, a 45-year-old a victim, said he lost three teeth after he was attacked and left unconscious. "I was heading home at 9pm on a Sunday after work when a group of youths descended on me with crude weapons.

My upper lip was cut and three teeth knocked out," said Maina. "Every victim who has fallen prey to the gang has lost teeth; we fear it might be a cult or people engaging in rituals where teeth are part of the paraphernalia," he added. Bernard Githu, 55, lost two teeth to the assailants in an experience he described as traumatic. "It was a scene from hell.

Within minutes, I had been knocked down with a blunt object and they started beating and slashing me with a knife on the head and mouth," he recalled. Githu, who suffered deep cuts to his head, is now partially blind due to the cuts on his eyes.

He said the attackers used a pair of scissors to remove the teeth. Another victim, George Muhia is fighting for his life at the Intensive Care Unit of the Nakuru Level Five hospital. He sustained serious head cuts and lost three teeth in the attack. The incidents have caused tension in the area and some residents, including boda boda operators, have joined hands to hunt for the culprits.

Charles Mwangi, a boda boda operator at Muchorwe, said they had arrested two suspects who had escaped to Kericho. "We got information about the gang and informed police about our intention to go to Kericho and arrest the suspects.

Two police officers accompanied us and we managed to capture two," he said. He said the two confessed to being part of the gang. Molo Deputy County Commissioner Hassan Ali said the gang will face the full force of the law. "We are warning those behind attacks to cease or face full force of the law," he said.



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You can use your +/- or =/- keys to jump from slide to slide

Slide #1: INSIDE TRAP



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INSIDE TRAP

For better or worse, tourist traps are part of the American landscape. Countless overhyped, colorful, quirky, and sometimes downright mystifying spots draw sightseers nationwide. Whether a given attraction qualifies as a tourist trap is often in the eye of the beholder. Travel blogger David James of The GypsyNester has his own test: Visitors usually leave feeling a little swindled.

"But we love tourist traps. David cannot pass them by," says his wife, Veronica James. "Boomers are really into this stuff because, when we were kids, that's where we went. We would pack up our station wagon and go to these places."

Some are iconic locales now overrun or overrated. Others lure road trippers out of the way of their intended destinations. They might be cheesy, inauthentic, overpriced, crowded, boring, ugly, or just plain not worth the time. We talked to travel bloggers and industry professionals and read online reviews to identify tourist traps in every state.

Related: 50 Small Towns to Visit Across the U.S.

Slide #2: ALABAMA



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ALABAMA

At the McDonald's in Newport, a bronze bust and a photo commemorate the day in 1984 when President Ronald Reagan came by for a photo op with a Big Mac. (The goal was to make him look like an average Joe, which he made clear he was not, by asking an aide what he was "supposed" to order.) Although a plaque reads, "President Reagan ate here," Roadside America reports that the restaurant where the Gipper ate was demolished, and the original memorabilia is gone. A new McDonald's was built on the same site in 2006.

Slide #3: ALASKA



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ALASKA

Gold Dredge 8 provides a window into Fairbanks' gold-mining days and receives generally good reviews, but there are plenty of tourist trap tactics at play. It costs \$40 for adults and \$25 for children to take a narrated train ride to the dredge, visit the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and briefly pan for gold -emphasis on "briefly." It seems the chief purpose of the tour is to steer people to the extensive gift shop.

Slide #4: ARIZONA

ARIZONA



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true cowboy fanatics. And even they might want to rethink this destination, which detractors label gimmicky and overpriced.

Deriding staged gunfights lasting only 30 seconds and declaring the

Tombstone is worth a visit only for

O.K. Corral just okay, critical reviewers say the town of

Slide #5: ARKANSAS



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ARKANSAS

Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro is said to be the world's only diamond-bearing site open to the public, but some reviewers scoff that they could find the same variety of rocks in their driveways. They report that kids quickly lose interest in digging in the hot sun and hard dirt. Better to skip the fee of \$8 for adults and \$5 for children.

Slide #6: CALIFORNIA



CALIFORNIA

Fisherman's Wharf traces its history to the 1800s, when it was the home base of San Francisco's fishing fleet, but it has evolved over the years into tourism central. Today it's riddled with overpriced junk for sale, street vendors preying on unsuspecting tourists, and too

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many people to make it comfortable to walk around.

Slide #7: COLORADO



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COLORADO

A pedestrian and transit space covering about 1.3 miles in downtown Denver, the 16th Street Mall is a tourist trap akin to Times Square in New York City and Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles. It's overrun with chain stores and restaurants, offering very little that's unique to Denver.

Slide #8: CONNECTICUT



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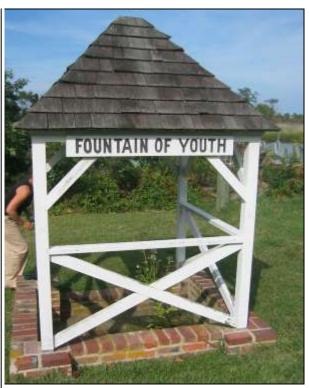
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CONNECTICUT

The Pez Visitor Center in Orange doesn't draw the same adoration as its namesake candy dispensers. A "self-guided tour" mainly entails access to a gift shop and a peek through a window at a factory that may not be running. For some visitors, though, a look at the staggering variety of dispenser heads made since 1948 may be worth the \$5 price of entry for adults (\$4 for children). It comes with a \$2 credit for use in the gift shop -- hint, hint.

Slide #9: DELAWARE



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DELAWARE

It seems a tad unfair to continue calling a well in Lewes a "Fountain of Youth" when it has dried up (particularly given how crazed people are about preserving their youth). It's said to have been discovered in 1631 by the area's Dutch colonists, but it's unclear what made locals believe the water had such magical powers, or what makes tourists believe the well is worth a visit.

Slide #10: FLORIDA



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FLORIDA

Never heard of a skunk ape? You're not alone. According to the website of the Skunk Ape Research Center, it's a large, hairy, bipedal mammal that calls the Florida Everglades home and may be a distant relative of Bigfoot. Reviewers point out that the facility in Ochopee, which charges \$5 admission, is not a "research center" at all -- just a gift shop with a small museum devoted to an obscure mythological creature.

Slide #11: GEORGIA



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GEORGIA

While some may find the history of Coca-Cola and its various flavors interesting, Georgia finance writer David Bakke calls out the World of Coca-Cola museum in Atlanta as plagued by long lines, mediocre exhibits, and pricey souvenirs. Visitors pay \$16 for adults and \$12 for children to enjoy what amounts to a giant Coke commercial.

Slide #12: HAWAII



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Slide #13: IDAHO

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HAWAII

A retreat for Hawaiian royalty in the 1800s, Honolulu's world-famous Waikiki Beach is now plagued by crowds and trash. It has attracted both a large homeless population and the likes of Hermès, Gucci, and Prada. Visitors have described the commercialized beach as a cross between New York City and Miami Beach, and not in a good way.



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IDAHO

Tour guides talking about the dayto-day lives of prostitutes,
represented by tarted-up
mannequins? The Oasis Bordello
Museum in Wallace seeks to
provide an authentic glimpse into
the colorful past of the mining
district where this brothel is located,
but some visitors say the museum
is sad and creepy, or perhaps not
worth the \$5 admission.

Slide #14: ILLINOIS



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ILLINOIS

Between the \$12 price to ride the Ferris wheel, crowds, mediocre bars, and cafeteria food, locals often steer clear of Chicago's Navy Pier, leaving it for the tourists, resident Rachel Cooper says. Still, there are a few redeeming attractions, such as performances by the Chicago Shakespeare Theater (although tickets aren't cheap) and epic fireworks displays over Lake Michigan.

Slide #15: INDIANA



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INDIANA

What started as an ordinary baseball has grown into the world's largest ball of paint and one of Indiana's most visited roadside attractions, as hard as that might be to believe. After about 36 years of painting, the ball has at least 23,400 layers and weighs more than 4,000 pounds. Tourists passing by Alexandria can call to make an appointment to view the ball -- but why?

Slide #16: IOWA



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Slide #17: KANSAS

IOWA

There's not a whole lot to see here, folks -- that's one of the primary criticisms of Spook Cave. An escorted boat tour of a flooded cave in McGregor does give visitors a chance to learn about the history of limestone in the region and view stalactites. Whether that's worth \$12 for adults and \$8 for children is the question. There's also a pricey gift shop.

KANSAS

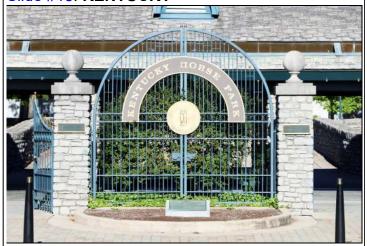


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Cawker City's claim to fame: the world's largest ball of twine. Apparently there's been some competition for that title since the ball was started in 1953. Although it's often cited among the country's best roadside attractions, it hardly seems worth a detour of more than two hours round-trip off the nearest interstate.

Slide #18: KENTUCKY



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KENTUCKY

Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington is billed as the only park in the world dedicated to man's relationship with horses.

Summertime entry costs \$20 for adults and \$9 for children, and that's just the start. Parking adds \$5; half-hour horse rides cost \$25; and pony rides for the kids -- three times around the paddock -- are \$5 each. Horse farm tours cost \$40 for adults and \$20 for children.

Slide #19: LOUISIANA



LOUISIANA

It's an iconic destination, yes, but Bourbon Street, in the French Quarter of New Orleans, has become increasingly known for strip clubs, wild parties, tacky offerings, and scammers seeking to separate visitors from their money. Don't want to avoid the historic street http://img-s-msn-com.akamaized.net/tenant/amp/entityid/BBuCc0X.img? h=373&w=624&m=6&q=60&o=f&l=f

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altogether? Just do some research, pick your spots ahead of time, and take care to avoid the con artists.

Slide #20: MAINE



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MAINE

Entirely geared toward tourists, the Land's End Gift Shop sells everything from lobster-print pants to lobster keychains and bumper stickers. There are also calendars featuring idyllic New England images, plush animals (including, of course, lobsters), mugs, hats, and other miscellaneous gifts to help visitors remember Maine. Save your money for some real lobster.

Slide #21: MARYLAND



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Slide #22: MASSACHUSETTS

MARYLAND

The sign for God's Ark of Safety proclaims, "Noah's Ark Being Rebuilt Here!" The plan, 30 years in the making, is to construct a replica with the same dimensions listed in the Bible. But the ministry building it in Frostburg has managed to erect only a tangle of steel beams so far. In the meantime, someone else has beat them to it and is charging \$40 a head.



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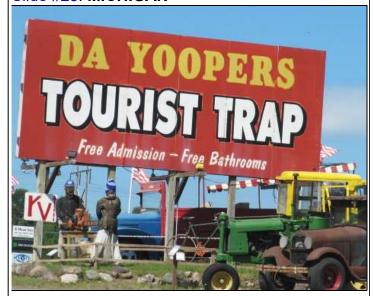
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MASSACHUSETTS

Wizard schools, ghost tours, and oddball Frankenstein and Dracula "museums" have taken over Salem, once a truly intriguing town. It dates to 1626 and is notorious for holding witch trials that led to the hanging of 19 innocent people. Tourist trap economics have come to trump historical charm, say David and Veronica James of The GypsyNester, although the Salem Witch Museum is an exception.

Slide #23: MICHIGAN



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Slide #24: MINNESOTA

MICHIGAN

"Tourist trap" is right there in the name: Da Yoopers Tourist Trap in Michigan's Upper Peninsula doesn't take itself too seriously. This eclectic collection of kitsch includes Big Gus, the world's largest working chainsaw; Big Ernie, the largest working rifle in the world; and Gravel Gertie, the largest motorized tricycle in Michigan. There's a rock shop and a souvenir shop selling Tshirts, bumper stickers, coffee mugs, sports memorabilia, gag gifts, and a variety of unusual items made from wood, glass, and metals -- a little something for everyone, it seems.

MINNESOTA

The Mall of America attracts 40 million visitors a year with chain stores that most people probably have near their hometowns. Some



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Slide #25: MISSISSIPPI



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Slide #26: MISSOURI

MISSISSIPPI

Minnesota.

The sight of a roadside restaurant in the shape of a 28-foot-tall woman draws many tourists intrigued at the prospect of eating inside her skirt. But the building is based on an offensive archetype: Mammy's Cupboard dates to 1940, a time not exactly focused on political correctness. Although it was repainted a lighter skin tone during the civil rights movement, it remains the subject of much criticism and social debate.

of the biggest draws have high prices: \$35 for a day pass at Nickelodeon Universe, \$24.25 for adults and \$17.25 for kids at the aquarium, and \$20 a person for the Crayola Experience. One saving grace: No tax on clothing in

MISSOURI

A theme park in Branson that opened in 1960, Silver Dollar City is no Disney World. It has 40 rides and plenty of detractors who say it's run-down, not kid-friendly, and not laid out well. At \$61 for adults and



\$50 for children, it's overpriced to boot.

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Slide #27: MONTANA



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Slide #28: NEBRASKA

MONTANA

The collection of silver dollars on display at Lincoln's World Famous 50,000 Silver \$ Bar in Haugan was started in 1952, and by now there are coins covering the walls, bar, and ceiling. There's also a familyrun restaurant, a motel with free RV parking, a convenience store, casinos, and "Montana's largest gift shop." If you'd like to marvel at other people's money while spending your own, this is the tourist trap for you.

NEBRASKA

With the real Stonehenge often labeled a tourist trap, it's hard to see the appeal of a replica made from vintage American automobiles painted gray to look like giant



stones. Those who have visited Carhenge in Alliance describe it as everything from a step above a junkyard to the perfect Griswold family moment.

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Slide #29: NEVADA



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Slide #30: NEW HAMPSHIRE

NEVADA

It's probably not helpful to name the entire city of Las Vegas, even though it's certainly one of the most deliberately designed tourist traps in history. We'll offer up this little gem instead: the Area 51 Alien Travel Center and Brothel in Amargosa Valley. A name that baits tourists with both "alien" and "brothel" really speaks for itself. Close encounters, indeed.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Once a farm and now an Old Westthemed park, Six Gun City in Jefferson started with an Indian Camp, gift shop, and stagecoach and pony rides. Over the years, water rides were added, as were go-karts, a roller coaster, bumper boats, and much more. More



recently, however, visitors say the place has fallen into disrepair and can be just plain depressing -- especially after paying \$24 a person to get in.

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Slide #31: NEW JERSEY



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Slide #32: NEW MEXICO

NEW JERSEY

Tacky. Not a good place for children. In need of refurbishing. These are just some of the downsides of the present incarnation of the Atlantic City Boardwalk, reviewers say. The iconic boardwalk, lined with stores, restaurants, and casinos, dates to 1870 and unfortunately has seen far better days.

NEW MEXICO

The town of Roswell has become synonymous with UFOs (thanks to an alleged crash in 1947), but it doesn't have much to offer aside from that claim to fame. The primary highlights for alien fans are



the International UFO Museum and Research Center (\$5 for adults, \$2 for children) and Roswell UFO Tours (\$100 an hour for one to four people).

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Slide #33: NEW YORK



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Slide #34: NORTH CAROLINA

NEW YORK

In a city with countless one-of-a-kind museums, two overpriced chain museums in Times Square draw wide disdain from travel bloggers. Madame Tussauds Wax Museum and Ripley's Believe It or Not cost about \$25 to get into, and neither has anything unique to offer visitors to the Big Apple.

NORTH CAROLINA

It's fitting for High Point, known as the home furnishings capital of the world, to be home of the world's largest chest of drawers. Originally built in the 1920s, complete with knobs and giant dangling socks, it served as an information bureau --



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pun undoubtedly intended. Then a furniture store in Jamestown, a 10-minute drive away, built what looks like an 80-foot chest on the outside of its showroom, somehow diminishing the value of both.

Slide #35: NORTH DAKOTA



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Slide #36: OHIO

NORTH DAKOTA

Don't leave the choice of a North Dakota casino to chance. From Spirit Lake Casino in Saint Michael to 4 Bears Casino in New Town and Dakota Magic in Hankinson, visitors complain of a general lack of quality and professionalism at smaller tribal casinos, citing run-down machines, unpleasant atmospheres, and very few winners. "ATM pays out," one customer snarks in an online review. "That's about it."

OHIO

Criticism of the cooking at Mary Yoder's Amish Kitchen, Bakery, and Gift Shop in Middlefield is all too common. Reviewers say the food, often in a buffet, is bland, unappetizing, and overpriced. The gift shop is also expensive, they



say, with a warning to stop only if there's nothing else open. But that's easier said than done when the tour bus stops at the restaurant.

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Slide #37: OKLAHOMA



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Slide #38: OREGON

OKLAHOMA

With a tepee out front and a KOA campground, Cherokee Trading Post near El Reno has "tourist" written all over it. But, hey, if you're in the mood to shop for moccasins and Native American "art," this is the place.



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OREGON

Like many tourist traps, Prehistoric Gardens in Port Orford is likely to be irresistible to children, with a lifesize Tyrannosaurus at the front gate. But some visitors say it's overpriced, at \$12 for adults and \$8 for children, and provides less than 15 minutes of entertainment. In an age of "Jurassic Park" films and the dinosaur robots of the George S. Eccles Dinosaur Park in Utah, steel and concrete sculptures may not cut it.

Slide #39: PENNSYLVANIA



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PENNSYLVANIA

For those not familiar, Ride the Ducks offers a chance to whiz around a city on land and water. In Philadelphia, the 80-minute tour takes visitors through the famous Museum District and into the Delaware for a cruise. "Mindnumbingly awful" is how Philadelphia magazine describes the outing, which costs \$31 for adults and \$20 for children.

Slide #40: RHODE ISLAND

RHODE ISLAND

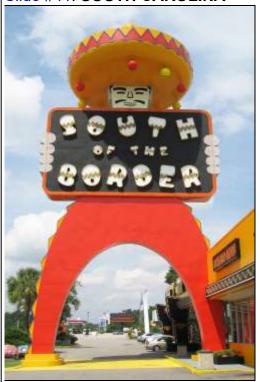


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The Big Blue Bug is a 58-foot-long termite -- 928 times the size of a real termite. Designated the world's largest bug, it cost \$20,000 to build out of steel and fiberglass. But don't make the mistake of stopping in Providence just to see it. The bug can be appreciated well enough from Interstate 95.

Slide #41: SOUTH CAROLINA



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Slide #42: SOUTH DAKOTA

SOUTH CAROLINA

One word: tacky. That's how blogger Tonya Harmati of Geek Girl Reviews describes South of the Border in Hamer. She's not alone: Travel review sites are full of mediocre reviews of this cluster of restaurants and shops offering everything from fireworks, knick-knacks, and bumper stickers to leather, antiques, and hats. Its towering statue of a sombrero is well-known to road trippers as a place to stretch your legs on a long drive -- but nothing more.

SOUTH DAKOTA



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Wall Drug may have started as a drugstore in 1931, but it has morphed into a classic American tourist trap with a sprawling souvenir shop and eateries that are collectively "crowded, overpriced, and stupid," say the GypsyNester duo. Countless signs along Interstate 90 make travelers feel as though they absolutely have to stop, but many who do regret it.

Slide #43: TENNESSEE



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Slide #44: TEXAS

TENNESSEE

Elvis has long since left the building, yet his Memphis home continues to rake in oodles of cash from devoted fans. Tickets to Graceland start at nearly \$40 for adults and \$17 for children and cost as much as \$80 for a VIP tour. That's not to mention the multiple gift shops on the grounds selling Elvis-themed tchotchkes.

TEXAS

Devil's Rope Museum in McLean has an intriguing name and free admission, but it may become less interesting when visitors find out that "devil's rope" is barbed wire. That's right. This quirky museum



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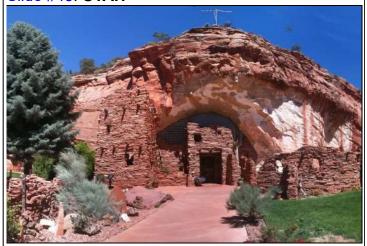
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Slide #45: UTAH



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UTAH

While \$5 a person is not a lot to pay, for some it's just too much for a "tour" of Moqui Cave that lasts just a few minutes. The cave near Kanab is billed as a natural history museum, but visitors complain that the collection of Native American artifacts, dinosaur tracks, and minerals is paltry at best. They say the attraction is mostly a gift shop -- and why pay an entrance fee to shop?

showcases the 450 patents that apparently exist for barbed wire, as well as more than 2,000 variations that have been found by collectors. For some visitors, it's fascinating.

For others, it's just fencing.

Slide #46: VERMONT



VERMONT

It's not worth going far to look at a very pretty hole in the ground that isn't the Grand Canyon. For \$4 for adults and \$2.50 for children, Rock of Ages (a company that makes "enduring art" -- its euphemism for headstones) takes visitors to a granite quarry and on a factory tour.

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The visitors center peddles granite gifts and jewelry.

Slide #47: VIRGINIA



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VIRGINIA

What's the obsession with recreating Stonehenge, exactly? Foamhenge is made entirely of Styrofoam. It was put up on April Fools' Day in 2004, and these days some visitors feel like the joke's on them. They say the kitschy sight hasn't been kept up and is falling into disrepair. That includes a dirt road full of ruts leading to the attraction.

Slide #48: WASHINGTON



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WASHINGTON

Reviews of Seattle Children's Museum, along with local media, say the exhibits are far from innovative, many of the toys are similar to what's at home, and exhibits are poorly maintained. For children older than 4, it will likely be a tad boring and not worth the cost of admission -- more than \$9 for adults and children.

Pictured: Seattle Center, where the museum is located.

Slide #49: WEST VIRGINIA



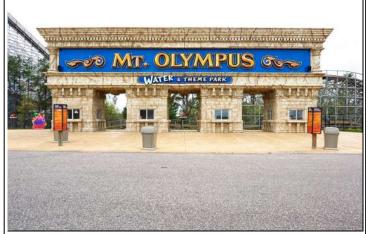
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WEST VIRGINIA

A perplexing collection of statues at Farnham Fantasy Farm in Unger, the "Farnham Colossi" run the gamut from a 25-foot-tall fiberglass muffler man to a beach dude statue and a Big John bag boy. It's a half-hour off the Interstate (whether 70 or 81) to get to the site of these massive figures.

Slide #50: WISCONSIN



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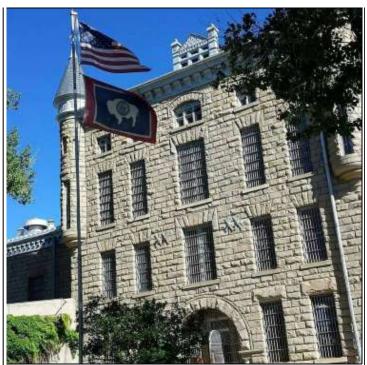
WISCONSIN

The Wisconsin Dells area is a tourist trap to end all tourist traps, with tacky water parks and wacky attractions now divorced from the namesake rock formations that originally drew sightseers. Even a breathless write-up on Roadside America admits, "At times the Dells seems like a ravenous snake, swallowing tourists whole, digesting their lump of vacation energy and disposable income."

Slide #51: WYOMING

WYOMING

Tours of the abandoned and crumbling Wyoming Frontier Prison in Rawlins, which opened in 1901 and closed in 1981, include viewing the Punishment Pole, where prisoners were whipped with rubber



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hoses, and the chance to sit in a real gas chamber. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$7 for children -- in other words, \$30 for a family with small children to endure weeks of nightmares afterward.

Latest changes (-> RSS <-)

2016-08-04

updated support for nba.com, theLocal.*

2016-08-01

- added support for www.realtor.com
- updated support for faz.net, pcgamer.com, sueddeutsche.de

Faith-healing preacher banned from U.K. preaching in Hamilton | Toronto Star

By Jesse Winter Staff Reporter thestar.com



thestar.com logo

Controversial evangelical preacher Todd Bentley, whose claims include curing cancer and raising the dead, is leading a revival in Hamilton.

Nineteen-year-old Joel Garcia shuffles across the stage, stooped and in pain.

Todd Bentley approaches. He presses his hand on Garcia's chest and begins to pray.

"Bam!" he shouts, pressing harder on Garcia's chest "Bam, bam."

Garcia quivers before collapsing onto the floor, where he lies motionless while an attendant holds his hand. Finally he rises and is helped off stage while Bentley praises the healing power of God.

The Abbotsford, B.C.-born Bentley, 40, is a controversial character. The Canadian preacher who claims his sermons can cure cancer and raise the dead has been preaching in residency at the River International Church in Hamilton since May.

Bentley rose to prominence in 2008 after leading a revival in Lakeland, Florida that drew tens of thousands of worshipers hoping to be healed of their ailments by his touch.



Faith healer Todd Bentley ministers to worshipers at the River International Church in Hamilton, Aug 2, 2016. A polarizing figure in the Pentecostal Church, Bentley claims his touch can heal cancer and blindness, and raise the dead.

Faith healer Todd Bentley ministers to worshipers at the River International Church in Hamilton, Aug 2, 2016. A polarizing figure in the Pentecostal Church, Bentley claims his touch can heal cancer and blindness, and raise the dead. (Jesse Winter / Toronto Star) | Order this photo

In 2012 he was barred from entering the U.K. over concerns that his methods were too violent. After the Lakeland revival, videos began to surface online of him kicking and punching people he was trying to heal.

"I kicked a woman in the face," Bentley said, describing one of the videos in a backstage

interview after a recent rally. "I can't expect people to understand this."

Bentley says his methods are commanded by God, and he must obey his orders.

"It was in a gift of faith and I can't expect people to understand that if they're not in the charismatic, Pentecostal church," he explained.

"I was in a meeting, and I felt like I was supposed to walk up and, you know, kick this woman," he said.

"Just before my boot touched her face, she fell under the power and collapsed. She got up and was healed from something in her hip," Bentley said.

In previous tellings of this tale, Bentley described the woman collapsing as his "biker boot" touched her face.

The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada said it has accredited 3,700 preachers, who are held accountable for their "personal integrity, theology and ministerial standards." Bentley is not one of them, the organization said.

Bentley's ministry confirmed that he is an independent preacher who has never been given credentials by any Pentecostal assembly.

As the controversial videos spread, former British Labour MP Malcolm Wicks helped petition the British government to keep Bentley out of the country. It worked.

"They said I'm a threat to British society," Bentley said in the interview.

"They put me on the same kind of banned list as they would put a terrorist," Bentley said. "They claimed it was because of fanatical religion. I asked 'What makes my brand of religion fanatical?' You've never heard me preach."

Despite his reputation for such physical ministering, Bentley insists that in 17 years of preaching, no one has ever been injured at his meetings.

Like most of his claims, it's nearly impossible to verify.

For more than two hours the night of Aug. 2, Bentley harangued worshipers in Hamilton, claiming his sermons have healed the blind, restored crippled limbs and cured people of cancer.

Oscillating between a conspiratorial whisper and a booming roar, the heavily-tattooed Bentley told of one woman whose cancerous tumour was, according to him, forced from her body by his presence alone. It slid down her leg to the floor, Bentley said. He claims she picked it up and carried it to him.

"Totally healed of a cancerous tumour in her leg. I've never smelled something so like a toxic swamp," he shouted into the microphone to the crowd of around 120 people. Some collapsed in gales of what Bentley called holy laughter. Others wept and convulsed.

A woman prays while faith healer Todd Bentley preaches at the River International Church in Hamilton Aug. 2, 2016. (Jesse Winter/Toronto Star)

Bentley talked about another woman who broke down in tears after her clubbed feet were miraculously healed, he said.

At one point in the evening, while telling of an anti-cancer crusade in Indonesia, Bentley compared himself to Jesus.



A woman prays while faith healer Todd Bentley preaches at the River Minutes before while still on stage, Bentley International Church in Hamilton Aug. 2, 2016.

Backstage after the meeting, Bentley was much more circumspect about his healing abilities.

"I don't declare that they are healed, I just let them share their story of their experience." Bentley said.

"You will never hear me telling someone to come off their medicine. You'll never hear me telling someone to not go to their doctors. I encourage that," he said.

had told of another miracle he performed

recently on a young man in Alberta who suffered what Bentley called "pancreatic attacks."

"Rather than be treated in the hospital — not that I'm against hospitals — but he checked himself out and he came to the meeting in faith that he was going to be touched. And he did, by the end of the night. He had strength and virtue come into his body. It's another great testimony of the healing power of God," Bentley said as the crowd cheered.

Even so, Bentley said he's not worried about people coming to him for healing and turning their backs on conventional medicine.

"I can only be responsible for my part," he said during the interview. "If they don't go back to the doctor and they don't come back to my meeting, I can't be responsible for following up. Fifty thousand people sometimes show up to my meetings."



Worshipers lay on the floor after passing out from a touch by faith healer Todd Bentley at the River International Church in Hamilton, Aug. 2 2016.

Worshipers lay on the floor after passing out from a touch by faith healer Todd Bentley at the River International Church in Hamilton, Aug. 2 2016. (Jesse Winter/Toronto Star)

While there were far fewer than the night of Aug. 2 in Hamilton, Bentley's Facebook Live stream purported to have reached nearly 500,000 people, racking up 10,000 views.

After the Lakeland revivals, ABC News investigated Bentley's claims of healing but concluded that not a single one could be independently verified.

David Reed is a professor emeritus of pastoral theology at Toronto's Wycliffe College, and also an Anglican minister. He said independent faith-healing preachers like Bentley often run afoul of more established Pentecostal assemblies.

"In my estimation, Todd has an irresistible urge to be very dramatic," Reed said of Bentley's preaching style, comparing it to Donald Trump's runaway ego and bombast in the U.S. presidential election.

While Reed conceded that much of the criticism directed at Bentley stems unfairly from his bad-boy biker persona — Bentley is covered in tattoos, sports a bright red beard and facial piercings — he says it's Bentley's claims of people cured by physical force that go too far.

"I have little patience for that," Reed said, calling it "pure showmanship" that goes beyond the bounds of what a professional preacher should do.

Reed also takes issue with Bentley's on-stage claims of people being instantly cured. Though Reed does believe in the power of prayer to heal in a general sense, he drew a distinction between healing someone spiritually and curing someone of a specific disease. He said it can be dangerous for preachers to even suggest people turn their backs on traditional medicine.



Faith healer Todd Bentley preaches at the River International Church in Hamilton, Aug. 3, 2016.

Faith healer Todd Bentley preaches at the River International Church in Hamilton, Aug. 3, 2016. (Jesse Winter/Toronto Star)

Bentley acknowledged the lack of scientific evidence backing up his claims. He said doctors make it harder to track by refusing to disclose patient information and are often unwilling to associate their names with his work. His organization, Fresh Fire Ministries, collects personal testimonials from people claiming to be healed. They have around 500 so far, he said.

Bentley's performances typically last for upwards of four hours, the majority of it spent talking about himself and the miracles he's either witnessed or incited. The two lectures The Star attended at times veered into racially questionable grounds, touching on stereotypes about Africans, Asians and First Nations people.

Bentley is no stranger to controversy but for the most part, he shrugs off the criticism that comes his way.

"Am I a book judged by its cover? Yes. I seem to kind of welcome controversy," he said.

As the evening reached a fever pitch, worshipers lined the front of the stage hoping to receive a healing anointment from Bentley. One woman quivered as Bentley approached her, apparently so gripped in the emotion of the moment that she collapsed before he actually laid hands on her.

Others in the line up wept openly before collapsing onto the floor by the dozens. Members of Bentley's staff covered them with blankets.

"Make sure you get a good beard shot," he said, with a sidelong wink to two photographers crowded in around him as he pressed his right hand to a woman's forehead and began to pray, his voice tumbling out at high speed like an old-time auctioneer.

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Watch This Guy Dress Up Like A Tree And Seriously Freak Out Pedestrians

huffingtonpost.com

"What I'm doing here is called a tree awakening."

07/26/2016 05:21 pm ET David MoyeReporter, The Huffington Post

Wonder if he plans to branch out.

A 57-year-old man in Venice Beach, California, is hoping to "help people see the forest for the trees" by dressing up as a tree himself.



Araya Diaz via Getty Images



Araya Diaz via Getty Images

moving and freaking out passers-by.

His official name is Lionel Powell, but he is known to his neighbors as "Treeman," thanks to the elaborate costume he wears on the streets that includes stilts.

There's a method to his madness.

"What I'm doing here is called a tree awakening," he told 60 Second Docs, an online film series. "People are so busy they don't get to stop and smell the roses."

Powell has worked as a costume character for more than 20, dressing up as characters like Pluto and Eeyore at amusement parks like Walt Disney World and Universal Studios.

Now he has planted roots in Venice Beach, where he performs street theater in costumes of his own design.

Powell is especially fond of standing very still like a real tree before

"I get many different reactions, but 90 percent of people are awed. Doesn't matter how big they are," Powell told ArgonautNews.com. "Mostly what I get is after the surprise [of startling someone] is laughter."

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Araya Diaz via Getty Images

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stuff Last updated 10:13, August 30 2016



Netherlands Embassy The T-Rex has its own Dutch passport.

A 66 million-year-old *Tyrannosaurus* rex has experienced the convenience of modern air travel, flying from the US to its new home in the Netherlands.

The 6000 kilogram, 13 metre-long skeleton was transported from Chicago's O'Hare Airport to Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport last week by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines.

It shared the journey with 250 ordinary passengers, and carried its

own passport, complete with a head shot and signature (two claw strokes).



Naturalis Biodiversity Centre Trix's partially mounted skeleton.



Netherlands Embassy Precious cargo: Trix is loaded into the plane.

America to own and exhibit a T-Rex.

KLM Cargo executive vice president Marcel de Nooijer said it was a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" for passengers flying with the dinosaur.

The female T-Rex, named Trix, was excavated in Montana in 2013 by the Dutch museum, Naturalis Biodiversity Centre, and the Black Hills Institute in South Dakota.

She is considered one of the bestpreserved dinosaur skeletons in the world, with almost 80 percent of her bones found.

"When we started the search for T-Rex, I could not have imagined us finding such a remarkable and distinctive individual," Naturalis head of T-Rex research Dr Anne Schulp said.

Trix will be exhibited at the Naturalis Biodiversity Centre in the Dutch city of Leiden, which will be the first museum outside North

- Stuff

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The Trunk Murders and 'Sausage Ghost' of 1920s New Orleans

atlasobscura.com

A forgotten crime with all-too memorable details.

by Lauren Delaney George August 28, 2016



Tucked between dog-eared title records and 19th-century floor plans were the dismembered corpses of two young flappers, expertly diced. Limbs eternally akimbo and packed into their respective trunks, they would dance the Charleston no more.

The grim *Times-Picayune* article from October 28, 1927 is filed into a binder at the Williams Research Center of New Orleans. Headlined "Bodies Found in Trunks," it tells the ghastly end of Theresa and Leonide "Lonie" Moity. Their "Trunk Murders," a forgotten chapter of the city's lively history, involved clandestine streetcar flirtations, severed fingers, and the possible emergence of a "sausage ghost."

In 1927, Theresa and Leonide shared a crowded existence with their husbands—brothers Henry and

Joseph—and Theresa and Henry's three small children in the second-floor rooms of 715 Ursulines Avenue. Before the women's dispatch and disassembly, there were whispers of their "familiarity" with men other than their husbands.



For their part, Henry and Joseph were odd-jobs men, described by sources as "shiftless" and perpetually short on the funds needed to support their families. Theresa and Leonide also worked, expressing frustration at having to manage their children while taking on sewing jobs to bring in necessary cash. After separating from her husband, Joseph, Leonide continued to live with Henry and Theresa, and Henry fretted over her influence on his wife.

In New Orleans of the 1920s, even people of modest means might afford

domestic assistance. When housekeeper Nettie Compass arrived to clean the Moitys' apartment on the morning of October 27, 1927, a scene of bloody disarray greeted her. The frantic cleaning lady was soon joined by two insurance men who were conveniently nearby and who, in turn, tipped off local reporter, George William Healy. In his 1976 memoir, Healy described their discovery:

We found red stains on the floor and saw a large trunk in a bedroom, partially open. When I pulled up the trunk lid, a woman's body, arms, and legs severed from the torso, was exposed.

Healy borrowed a neighbor's telephone, requesting a second reporter before suggesting that it "might" be appropriate to alert the coroner. When the coroner and Healy's female colleague, Gwen, arrived,

she charged into the apartment and sighted several objects on a bed. "Look," said Gwen, holding up these objects. "Lady fingers." Four fingers had been cut from a woman's hand ... After placing the fingers back on the bed, Gwen moved to a second bedroom, found a second trunk, and opened it. It contained a second woman's body.

Resting on the torso was a bloodied cane knife, of the type used on sugar plantations. The "lady fingers" were discovered to have belonged to Theresa Moity, whose missing wedding ring was later retrieved from a gaping wound in her back. A gold bracelet still hung delicately from the wrist of an arm, now unburdened of its owner. Clumps of hair lay on the floor, caught in the shadows cast from Ursulines Avenue.



in the apartment on the second moor of this building at Utsuline street police found the mutilated bodies of Mrs. Henr Moity and Mrs. Joseph Moity stuffed into trunks. The body of Mrs. Henry Moity was in the front room at the right. The bod of Mrs. Joseph Moity was found in a rear room.

Theresa and Leonide's personal effects lay strewn among the gore: children's clothing, unfinished sewing projects, the women's lace garments, silk stockings, and beauty creams. In a turn worthy of pulp fiction, a manuscript written in Leonide's hand was discovered hidden in the cabinet of her bedroom. Rife with grammatical errors, its thinly veiled autobiographical story cautioned young girls to "be careful, for marriage is a life sentence." The rejection slip from her submission to a popular confessions magazine lay in a pool of her own blood.

As reporters and police took stock of the grisly tableau, there was one thing notably missing: Henry Moity. Henry had worked briefly as a butcher, and the *Times-Picayune* gleefully pointed out that "the manner in which the two bodies of the women were mutilated and dismembered indicated a man familiar with this trade." Radio dispatches alerted departing steamer ships to be on the lookout for a stowaway passenger answering to Henry's description: tattooed and, according to the newspaper, "singularly hairy."



The ensuing manhunt led through swamps and shipboards before a bedraggled Henry was pulled from nearby Bayou Lafourche. At first he maintained that the murders had been the work of a redheaded Norwegian seafarer, whom he had been forced to assist. By Tuesday November 1, however—less than a week after the murders—Henry had made a full confession, abandoning his tale of the villain seaman.

From a New Orleans prison cell, Henry smoked, attempted to paint, and

received curious visitors. He also divulged the details of his lurid crimes, and his furious jealousy of Theresa's lover, Joseph Caruso. The married Caruso operated a real estate office from the ground floor of 715 Ursulines. From the time the Moitys moved in, Theresa and Caruso "were pretty thick," Henry claimed in his confession to the District Attorney. The November 2, 1927 *Times-Picayune* repeated portions of this confession, in which Henry alleges that Theresa and Caruso took "friendly excursions on streetcars," and carried out a brazen flirtation under his nose, stealing hugs and passing notes in the darker corners of 715 Ursulines.



On Wednesday October 26, things had come to a head in the Moity household when Theresa and Leonide revealed their plans to move out. According to a 1957 letter from a Louisiana State Penitentiary prison warden, Theresa "is alleged to have flaunted a ten dollar bill in [Henry's] face and bragged that she could make more in an hour (as a prostitute) then he could in a week."

Later that day, Henry returned home to find Theresa and Leonide packing their belongings into two large trunks. An enraged Henry began drinking, interrupting his bender to purchase the murder weapon. When night fell over the quarter, the Moity women and children retired to their beds while Henry paced restlessly, drinking and contemplating the hidden cane knife. In his confession to the District Attorney, Henry admits that he considered killing himself and the children, but changed his mind when he imagined his wife "running around with Joe Caruso and the rest of them."



As he stood over the sleeping form of Theresa, studying the angles of the knife, he suddenly found himself swinging like a man possessed. As he later recounted to the DA, "She

didn't say a word or move. She just relaxed and the blood rushed." Rushing into Leonide's bedroom, he struck her as she tumbled from the bed where she had been sleeping. Afterward came the grim work of cutting up the bodies, as Henry stuffed the women into the trunks they had packed hours earlier. It wasn't the departure they had anticipated.

In March 1928, Henry was convicted of Theresa's murder and sentenced to life in prison.

Throughout his trial and imprisonment, he insisted that he still loved his wife, even claiming to be married in the 1940 US Census, years after her death. His 1941 appeal for a pardon was rejected by the governor and in 1944, he briefly escaped from the Louisiana State Penitentiary. Excepting his prison escape, the warden's 1957 letter claimed that Henry was "one of the best prisoners we've ever had." He continued to paint in prison, his portrait of Huey Long even making its way into the Baton Rouge governor's mansion, where it hung for many years. In 1957, he died of a stroke in California's Folsom Prison, where he is buried.

One of the most extraordinary aspects of the sensational "Trunk Murders" is how completely they have been forgotten. While tour guides repeat tales of New Orleans's more famous criminals, they exclude the murders that the 1927 *Times-Picayune* proclaimed to be "the most brutal committed in New Orleans crime history."

Though the legacy of Henry's crime may persist in another local legend: the "Sausage Ghost." Recounted in the 1945 Louisiana folklore collection, *Gumbo Ya-Ya*, the tale tells of a woman murdered by her butcher husband and turned into—you guessed it—sausages, to be sold to unsuspecting customers on Ursulines Avenue.



Is it possible that the Big Easy's version of Sweeney Todd was born of the 1927 trunk murders, altered in retellings to more nightmarish proportions? Though details differ between the Sausage Ghost legend and the trunk murders case, Henry Moity's November 2 proclamation through the bars of his prison to *Times-Picayune* reporters certainly nags the question: "If I ever get my hands on that Joe Caruso I'll chop him up into little pieces, not big pieces like my wife, but little pieces—My God, I'll make him look like something that's been run through a sausage mill!"

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The truth about Hull woman 'who died of spontaneous human combustion'

September 11th 2016 hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: January 16, 2016



HIT THE HEADLINES: A Hull Daily Mail article from January 6, 1905, right, reports of a victim suffering spontaneous human combustion.



HULL WIDOW FATALLY BURNED.

A most mysterious and terrible burning accident, the unfortunate sufferer in which was a septuagenarian widow, Elizabeth Clark, occurred in the Trinity House Almshouses, Oarr-lane, last night. Clark was an inmate of the institution, and as she was exceedingly feeble, another inmate, Harriet Walton made it her duty to extinguish the light in the old lady's room regularly every night. She did this as usual last night about eleven o'clock, and then went to bed. Her room adjoins that of Clark's, and about six o'clock this morning Walton heard groams proceeding from the other woman's chamber.

She went to the door and found it looked, and

A mysterious Hull death was blamed on "spontaneous human combustion". **Mike Covell** and **David Spereall** uncover the truth about the woman who burst into flames.

January is generally a time of reflection, looking back at the year gone, and concentrating on the 11 months ahead.

But in January 1905, the residents of Hull were a little less preoccupied with their New Year's resolutions and more concerned with rumours that one of the locals had been the victim of spontaneous human combustion.

The very thought of spontaneous human combustion is frightening – not least because science has yet to deliver the final verdict on how anyone can suddenly burst into flames and burn to death without explanation.

So one can only imagine the feelings of unease in the winter of 1904-05, when a report of the death of an Elizabeth Clark in the press brought the phenomena a little closer to home.

Mr Covell explains: "Different theories have been presented as to how spontaneous human combustion happens, and I had always had an interest in cases, so imagine my surprise

when I found an alleged case in Hull.



"I first came across the case in a book by Charles Fort, called Lo, which was published in 1931. He spoke of this case of spontaneous human combustion. I then found other books all mentioning the case and knew I had to investigate."

Mr Covell had little more than Mrs Clark's name, the date of the horror and its location at Trinity Almshouse to go on, but a long search of historical newspapers at Hull History Centre reaped rewards.

The main coverage was in the Hull Daily Mail, and in an article dated January 6, 1905, headlined:

"Room door burst open. Almshouse inmates aroused by groans. Hull widow fatally burned."

The article reported a "most mysterious and terrible burning accident" at the residential home for elderly people in Carr Lane.

It described how mariner widow Mrs Clark, who was "exceedingly feeble" was discovered by a fellow "inmate" after hearing groans coming from her bedroom.

It read: "At about six o'clock this morning Mrs Walton heard groans proceeding from the other woman's chamber.

"She went to the door and found it locked, and caught the attention of another inmate, Wm Conyers, to the moans, which were exceedingly audible.

"Conyers burst open the door and discovered Clark in bed. Her body was covered with burns and not a shred of her nightdress remained. "There was no fire or light in the room, and Clark was in a semi-conscious condition."

The woman was taken to the hospital, but died from her "terrible" injuries at noon.

Despite the article going on to suggest the woman had struck a match, accidentally and unknowingly setting her nightdress on fire before climbing into bed, rumours of spontaneous combustion had the city gripped after researchers stated Mrs Clark had died from spontaneous human combustion.

Mr Covell has uncovered a series of reports on the case that shed new light on the mystery.

"If we take this first report at face value, it does look like it could be a case of SHC, but what if there were other reports?" Mr Covell queries.

"I didn't give up the search and found more newspaper reports on the case. "These showed that it was nothing more than a terrible accident, poor Mrs Clark had set fire to herself accidentally by lighting a candle in the dark. The later newspaper reports all pointed to this but they were ignored."

Mr Covell also points to other sources that took the case and changed the facts to make it more sensational.

One paper even changed her name to Mrs Burns in an apparent attempt to make the story more mysterious, which he admits hindered his research at first.

But dogged determination and a look at the official records put the case in a clearer light.

"I took two unusual steps," Mr Covell adds. "First, I ordered Mrs Clark's death certificate, which featured the true extent of her injuries and cause of death.

"It gave us more details about her life too – she was 71 years old when she died, and was the widow of Mr John Clark, who was a mariner.

"The death certificate mentioned the coroner, so I went one step further and contacted the coroner for Hull. "As you can imagine, having to put on the request that it was potentially a case of SHC was a little daunting but the coroner's office were really helpful, and in turn sent me to the East Riding Archives in Beverley, who kindly provided me with the inquest documents."

It read: Elizabeth Clark of Hull died from accidental death, she was 71 years of age, her death occurred on January 6 and her inquest was held on January 7 1905.

Within 40 years of her death, the almshouse that housed her until she died was also destroyed by fire during the Blitz.

3 comments

If only | January 16 2016, 7:24PM

Mark_Hull_65, I am a complete cynic! Firstly, I cannot give a definitive ruling on SHC, but I served in the Fire Service in the Humber area for 32 years. I attended an incident in Scunthorpe in the early 1970's (I can recall the location etc in great detail, but for confidentiality, will not be more specific), which concerned the fatality of an elderly female. The timing of the call for FB assistance was around 07:30 and on arrival, the victim was found in a chair, in a living room on the ground floor. There was little smoke and no need for the crew to wear breathing apparatus, although I would describe the atmosphere as acrid, with slight smoke damage throughout the property and a very greasy "film" over most surfaces. There was no fire damage in the house, except for the lower part of her nightdress, the seat of the chair in which the lady was sitting and the carpet where her lower limbs had been. The fire investigation showed no specific sources of ignition. The victim was a non-smoker, but enjoyed a drink of gin. I too have read books on SHC and my jury is still out. I have seen a huge range of human trauma caused by fire, I have never seen anything else that came remotely close to this.

Mark Hull 65 | January 16 2016, 4:31PM

Science does have an explanation for Spontaneous Human Combustion... It's a complete load of nonsense.

• Saucerbug | January 16 2016, 9:42AM

There's a very similar case that Mike might care to have a look at, from 16 February 1850 (the report of the inquest appeared in the HDM a day or two later). This one occurred in the Hull Charterhouse, another almshouse. The conditions in these places were much the same; people lived in a bed-sit with an open fire to provide all their heating and cooking. The fire would be banked down during the night, but there was always a risk.

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YUKARI HACIAHMETLİ KÖYÜ - Tülek Destanı

haciahmetli.tr.gg

Tulear Epic

northeast correctly two days away from the beginning Belebey called Balkan mountain is a bare mountain rose into the sky. Today it is bare but once was covered with lush forests. Then the sounds of birds in the forest, was involved in the songs of the shepherds and the flute sound Başkırd. Balkan Mountains not far from the coast in another country, there was a lake called Lake with cane decorated Asli. Even today, the lake comes to duck hunting in the area of nature on this coast. Named Harimarkas Balkan Mountains in the vicinity of a rich ancient times başkırd sitting army. Harimarkas was so rich that s the number of the product, even if he did not know the boundaries of their territory. Harimarkas had two wives: the name of someone he Banu'y. Harimarkas of the Banu had two sons, one is called the Abu Talib Malik had put the other's name. Harimarkas's second wife if the name was Gulzurg was that it was very brave and it also had a son and name Zoe Tülek. Everybody loved him. Zone two half-brothers and step-mother were the Banu Tülek no compassion. Both were also not draw, they were jealous. Zoe Tülek in Abu Talib t Malik also grow when their father they enter the teenaged Harimarkas a beautiful horse all three, trappings and a gift of nature birds were very nice manners. Young horses to ride, they shall take the interests of nature and hunting in the Balkan mountains. Zoe Tülek the other brother was always hunt more prey. So they hatch from their brother envy. But Zoe's mother Tülek Gulzurg fathers were much loved and touched him for being alive Gulzurg. One day Tülek Zoe's mother died; Zoe Tülek were orphaned. Since then, everything has changed. The house was dominated everything Bain. He was checking it wants. Meanwhile Tülek the passing of time zone if the Ebutalip, the horse of the husband to give Malik began to sway Harimarkas and was also successful. Zoe Tülek was amazed when the next day in backgammon. In Abu aspire to have their own horse if the horse and riding Malik. Zoe Tülek surprise; - What state? he asked. - We so desire, they said. - But if it's me, riding my horse to Malik. - We're playing for nothing chin, our nature is impatient. You can ride with us if you want to go hunting that old ancestors went the horses that drove the mind to say Zoe Tulen's objections. Zoe Tulen had to look behind them. Sadness for a long time failed to resolve. Meanwhile, mangy old female cast came at Zoe's side Tülek, - he said do not worry. Shoot out the prey that if my back. Zoe Tülek totally surprised. After a while we looked mangy throws. Finally he took the hit on the back if Abu Talib, and a thousand thousand is not mangy horse reared up, shook itself was a beautiful horse. The horse's name was on Aktulp scabies. Aktulp Backgammon so that sprang from a leap, as if it flew. After a minute or two there was next to his brother. His brothers were astonished to this. But they did not say anything. They stopped for foreign hunters to be by their side. By approaching lunchtime, I always go sit under a tree along the water's edge. Zoe Tülek down from the horse. He slept on top of the green grass. I fall asleep from exhaustion. Aktulp is standing beside. If you were born on the matter. They did not sleep a kind of jealousy of the two brothers. They stood quietly, they pointed out Aktulpar to stick a pin in between Pattaya. Flow at the end when the head of Zoe Tülek wake-haired, white-bearded saw a genial man. He stood up. Old man: - Do you know who I am asked. Zoe Tülek; - No sir, she said. I do not know. - I'm Khidr. Ulum Khidr interior of the water of life, God willing. Boy, are you so jealous of his brother. Just when you're asleep, they pointed a new nail hoof of the horse. But I'll help you. I will teach you a prayer, if the head of the dart when the prayer, takes you to salvation. Now read this prayer at the foot of the wind. He repeated several times after the prayers Speed, too. Zoe Tülek thoroughly learned suddenly realized he disappeared. Zoe Tülek prayer read. It blew toward the foot of the horse. Horseshoe nail came out, there were not even on the trail. Zoe Tülek gave thanks to God. He went to his brother by jumping his horse. They were brothers saw him in amazement. Jealousy became hatred. They found three young men immediately. These young people Zoe Tülek came next, they kept the horse suddenly began to whip Aktulpar. Thereupon jumped Aktulp ok with life as pain began running toward the lake. Soon, even the dust was visible. The horse was flying in the air as if it did not touch the ground with his feet. So were the fact the lake shore. Zoe Tülek one time as if he dismounts from his horse on the beach; - look at who had turned his head to the right of the beach seemed to say. Zoe Tülek since he looked. His heart began to beat with excitement. Foam with white feet at the lake is a beautiful young girl who was sitting hair. On the one hand he was brushing her hair in gold. This beautiful girl, in fact, the king of the lake emitted Han was the only short Susul. Zoe stopped in amazement as Tülek idols; He looked, looked, did not judge him at the end. He walked towards the girl: - I do not know how I got here, O beautiful girl, O rose of paradise look. I can tell you who I am? I'm coming from, where I am going, you know? She replied: - You're the youngest son of the richest of the rich Harimarkas. Zone Name is Tülek. Ava output. Pearl tall geese, you hunt for gold fox fur. Then the jealous brothers. He whipped his horse. You've come this far. Zoe had stuck Tülek: - You can not ever go to a place, he said. I forget my father raised me, I'll forget the grave of my mother raised me in the bosom. Me neither heaven nor need a place now. My place is at your side, but who are you? O beautiful girl who told me

that. She answered: - How can you deny the mother the father refuse. Give up on the world. You can not sit in our country, I am the daughter of the king lake. My father's country gave a very brave soul. It would be a pity. I can not be yours. I'll give you get a souvenir she diamond with pearl necklace my ring, returned to the country. -What pearl necklace to me, nor have the diamond ring, it does not have a thing to me, I'm enough, weah, I want it to embrace once. Girls; - Zoe Tülek since these look who's going? she showed a beautiful place with thin fingers. Zoe Tülek was looking back since then. Just then the girls, dived into the water like lightning. Yigit had understood the girl's trick but it was too late. Girls swimming and it was getting away. Had gone up to the middle of the lake, the water was only a hundred golden hair. Zoe Tülek was thinking more. He lifted himself into the lake. The girl has grown up in one fell swoop, grabbed by the hair. Susul was forced down to the lake bottom like an arrow. Zoe Tülek also followed him. They quickly got to the bottom of the lake. Here were two great palaces of glass emitted Han. This is a very fast flowing water around the palace had four drafts. She said, -Zoe Tülek darling, let my hair, I love you and I will be yours. Wait for me here, I put on my clothes and I came to him. Zoe Tülek; - but still left the girl's hair, saying deflection trick. Susul rushed into the room. Soft silk threw himself into bed. She began to cry putting pretty face among the pillows. How would describe this situation the father would tell him how he expects the supply of a warrior. This young man you love, can not live is no longer married to her, was it possible to tell his father. Zoe waited seven days and seven nights. Weak, sluggish fell. His face turned pale, hollow-it crashed. On the eighth day the girl he cheated, believing Khidr prayer taught to read. She begged God to withdraw the water. Almighty God fulfilled that Zoe Tüleg wished. The water current was stopped, faced the lake to dry, the waters began to retreat. Water land is suffocating from the terrific heat, drought raging everywhere provisions. Susulu forty maid rushed into the room to give the news, but he saw that the door is closed. Meanwhile emitted Khan's subjects saw Zoe Tülek in front of the palace. Beginning immediately realized that this disaster to bring foreigners. They started running right next to beg. Zoe Tülek refused wishes. - No, no, you are king, queen and you will all perish all of you. They ran to the Han people heard these words are emitted. They told him this great news. Hakan was very touched by this news. Without greetings running immediately next to the girl: - Dear Susul said what came disaster on you know my country. - I know, Dad. All right you also bring this disaster to know who he is? - No, Daddy. - This disaster brings a few days been waiting at the gate of the palace it is young. He loves you and wants that you give him. If that is so dear daughter, take her to the palace. Girls; - All right, Dad was extremely happy saying. Emitted Han dissipated Susul has improved the room, opened the door and ran to welcome the honored quests. -Excuse Me Zoe Tülek. I love you for sure. A few days because I'm afraid my father could not come to him. Come here, darling. he went into the arms of Zoe Tülek. Together they went to the palace. After Zoe Tülek read the prayer again, water ceramin NEW intensified as before, emitted Han old happy life in the country had begun. Everything was starting to fade revived corruption. Everyone in the country has shown a great miracle everyone was whispering that come along for the ride this time Başkırd: -This is not a man of mediocrity. Hakan loved this valiant, his daughter had given him as a wife. Now young people was immeasurable happiness. One day Susul of Zoya's side away, while some did not come back. When he next came Tülek Zone: -Where were. You did not go to the first place you see me? he asked. Susul gave yes-mark nodded. - id there that If, did you see me throw and born in? -G was both Asli Lake sahilind are. They're -N there? -At the stands where you left a stationary state, the head and wings of nature It stands a low state. I think Zoe Tülek and was touched. Re-read the prayer, he opened two water ran over the Aktulp will gladly master, came from behind to fly by flapping their wings nature. Suddenly, the grass around the king's palace yielding trees out, was a forest. Aktulp for grassland, forest product was death to nature. Again wave were closed and Zoe hid from the eyes of foreign Tülek with Susulu the astounded. Days, months, years passed. Zoe Tülek him a Kuray (flute) made of gold-headed, emeraldeyed, silver-footed brought a coach body. Kavala's work at the time it begins to play in the water, people of all coaches was put into this course views. Simple people are not even fish was running around looking for in this new marvel worthy views. But they are not looking for the coach of the gameplay, they were coming to listen to Zoya's shin. Everyone was happy. But Başkırd brave began to fade from day to day. Susul this state sensing: What is it, darling, your face is why such yellowing was left. Zoe He replied: It's not a life, I'm left here. Do not you live here? Why? Here you me, I love you. What more do you need? You have to like to what? My country, my beloved brethren. Susul is, they are waiting for me to recover from their captivity. There are Balkan Mountains rose to head in the air. Located on the forests. There are thousands of game animals. Have you ever heard that sound forest? The Susul. In fact, there are beautiful to look at what the lake. There are hundreds of such lakes in my country is located. A lot of wealth beneath the soil, gold, silver. But all this is nothing ... Oral my self my country, there are my kin ... How could I forget my this noble beloved brethren. Had heard a voice in the palace of Hakan emitted girl had asked when he saw that side walk Zoya is influenced by: N that had my son, what you're sorry. Did I offend you other subjects? It was my daughter something? Zoe He replied: -No honorable Hakan. Everything is in place. But I'm tired of this life. Now homesick, I miss my compatriots. Hakan

amazement asked: You're going where? -Yurdu Me, next to the sacred homeland of the Balkan mountains. Is next to the -Bale the mountains of what is it? Zoe Tülek told the Balkan mountains, he described the forest. Thereupon said Hakan; -Bale mountains of the Balkan mountain. Amman tell you I did not catch much. I've never seen anything like it in my life. But since you missed it, I'll bring him here in the middle of the lake. What are you laughing at, you see. After that, he called her Hakan subjects. He told Balkan mountain and lake in the middle of it, was ordered to bring his daughter in front of the palace. People firstly chose the three wise men from inside a meeting. They would call before the Balkan mountains. These three guys were looking at each side of the lake, they found something that they scan. Finally, they found a small hill. They thought the king so that he does not know what is in the Balkan mountains; If you have a iktif Başkırd valiant work with it, what do they have said no other mountain. Everybody hugged work. King of the Hill's daughter quickly they move in front of the palace. King turned and saw the mountain from the palace, was the menmun. Bestow on his subjects to disperse. Then he called his daughter and son and the other; -Business in your famous Balkan mountain. Does more need anything else? -No Rights education, not the Balkan mountain. What did -What. -Our This mountain they say at home, this hill is Hakan: -Then was very angry, saying they tricked me. Twenty-five men were all shot to stick. Hakan also enjoyed the fact that this movement did not Tülek of Zoe. Taking finally Hakan's presence; -ul Hakan, thank you very much to the kindness you have shown me. I will not stop here anymore. I miss my homeland. I can not live without it. I can not live in Susulu'suz. Master Hakan, give us. We Başkırd dormitory on, let's go to the Balkan Mountains. Let me reach my compatriots said there waiting. Hakan: What do you say? Am I going to leave my beloved daughter? Never, never, this can not be. Said these words to Susul said: -Muhtere My Daddy, meat royalties. Otherwise, the Zoe will be leaving us. Then what would I do. The old Hakan's eyes were filled with tears, said -He al. Has tried to overcome the sorrow and wiped the wet lashes. Now Susul and Zoe Tülek began to say goodbye to everyone. In fact, the lake was sorry for all residents. Zoya had everyone liked it so much that I did not want anyone to leave him. Aktulp would remain there as coach of nature and memory. Hagan said, you go with the grace -Thank. Goodbye Zoe Tülek. Take care of my daughter. I would ask that you alone. Keep what I say verbatim. If you keep my word, never in your life, do not worry. Please note the time you come to the edge of the lake and walk straight. 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Turoa's abominable snowman

stuff FRANCES FERGUSON

Last updated 15:25, August 29 2016



FAIRFAX NZ An Auckland man thought Turoa skifield, on the slopes of Mount Ruapehu, was the perfect spot to hide from the world for a while.

the slopes of Mount Ruapehu has instead ended up in court.

Equipped with snow gear, a shovel and grubber, Richard David Parker headed for the Turoa ski area in

A man with grand hopes of hiding out in an elaborate snow cave on

and grubber, Richard David Parker headed for the Turoa ski area, in Tongariro National Park, looking for some peace and quiet away from city life.

During his three days there he made a front balcony and entrance way by one of the chair lifts.

"I set it up late at night," he said after appearing in the Ohakune District Court following his arrest.

"Inside there was a big archway and the igloo roof coming over it for the snow layers and a big entrance with a main room and an opportunity for different entranceways and it was going to have a nice window down the bottom."

He was going to stay for a few days and experience a lost kiwi pastime.

But that plan was scuttled when

instead he was arrested for disorderly behaviour and resisting arrest.

Police also issued the 38-year-old Aucklander with a trespass order.

The keen camper was arrested last Sunday when a dispute occurred as Parker tried to move a public bench.

He was three hours away from finishing a snow shelter before being arrested.

With a limited supply of food the arrest turned out to be timely.

But Parker said his brief moment of escapism was stunning.



FRANCES FERGUSON/FAIRFAX NZ Richard David Parker was charged by the Ohakune Police for disorderly behaviour and resisting arrest after building a snow cave on the upper reaches of Turoa Skifield

get to the snow."



FAIRFAX NZ Equipped with snow gear, a shovel and grubber, Richard Parker made a front balcony and entrance way by the chair lift.

"It was amazing. I had an epic view.

"You wake up and the lifts aren't going so it was the silence.

"It's not what you get from everyday life. At night you get the wind drift and it's something that is getting harder for younger Kiwi's to do."

"It's one of my favourite places. I love Ohakune.

"It's so accessible and one of the few places in New Zealand you can

Parker, a regular visitor to the tourist town, had hoped to return to finish the cave.

He claims police had unlawfully arrested him and he's hoping to get the charges dropped during a judge alone trial in October.

Ohakune police Sergeant Mike Craig said it was the first time police had removed a person hiding in a snow cave.

"I've been here for 14 years and I'm not aware of another incident guite like this," he said.

"People do silly things and this was a bit out of the ordinary."

The Turoa Ski Area on the south-western slopes of Mt Ruapehu offers a massive 722m of vertical descent on New Zealand's highest chairlift - The "Highnoon Express".

Temperatures have reached up to minus 5 degrees celsius overnight during the height of winter.

Mike Brenton, programme manager for the Hillary Outdoors Education Centre in Tongariro, said sleeping in a snow cave was a serious undertaking.

"It's not something you do nilly willy and say I'm going to snow cave," he said.

"You've got to be well prepared and have good gear and know what your doing."

The not-for-profit charitable trust runs education courses working closely with the NZ Mountain Safety Council.

Students are taught how to make snow shelters from industry professionals.

He would not recommend anyone to go camping without being prepared and trained.

"They need to have good clothing, good gear and know what they're doing and to know where to go or it's a recipe for disaster."

"You could risk frost bite if you get it wrong."

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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Twice lucky: Dubai crash-landing survivor wins \$1 million

August 10, 2016 yahoo.com

Mohamed Basheer, a fleet sales coordinator at Al Tayer Motors, laughs during an interview in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on Wednesday, Aug. 10, 2016. Basheer survived the Aug. 3 crash-landing of an Emirates airliner in Dubai and won \$1 million in a sweepstakes drawing by Dubai Duty Free the following Tuesday. (AP Photo/Jon Gambrell)

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — After he escaped unharmed from the burning wreckage of an Emirates airplane that had crash-landed in Dubai, Mohamed Basheer already considered himself lucky.

Then came the call telling him he had won \$1 million.

"I said, 'Don't joke!" the 62-year-old Indian recounted, laughing inside the auto-body repair shop where he works in Dubai. "They said, 'Yes, you are the winner!' I said, 'No!""

Basheer won Dubai Duty Free's Millennium Millionaire sweepstakes Tuesday with a ticket he purchased July 6, just before he boarded an Emirates flight to head to India's Kerala state and his hometown of Pallickal.

He believes the 1,000-dirham (\$270) ticket, No. 845 in Series M222, was his 17th attempt to win the sweepstake.

Yet perhaps his luckiest numbers were yet to come as he boarded Emirates flight EK521 on Aug. 3 to return to Dubai. Sitting in seat 26G, Basheer said the flight passed normally for the 300 onboard until the Boeing 777-300 attempted to land at Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest international airfield.

The plane hit the runway, bounced and slammed into the ground again. For Basheer, who works at Al Tayer Motors auto body shop as a fleet operations coordinator, it felt like the shuddering stop of a speeding car with anti-lock brakes.

The cabin quickly filled with smoke when the plane came to a halt.

"Nobody knows what's happening," Basheer told The Associated Press in an interview Wednesday.
"But I'm not scared. ... I was supporting the people and also I saved my life."

He jumped out of the airplane's emergency exit and down the slide, before turning back to see the fire spreading as others fled. He said he saw the explosion that caused the crash's only fatality, an Emirati firefighter responding to the blaze.

But he said he remained in awe that the passengers all escaped.

"That really is a miracle," Basheer said. "Thanks for God and thanks for the pilot."

An investigation into the crash is ongoing, though radio traffic and transponder data suggest the aircraft tried to regain altitude in the last moments before it hit the ground. That could indicate the pilots were trying to go around for a second landing attempt when something went wrong.

For Basheer, a no-nonsense employee like many of the laborers, taxi drivers and others from Kerala who take jobs in the United Arab Emirates, he immediately went back to work at the auto shop.

And then, at 1.45 p.m. on Tuesday, he received the phone call telling him he'd won.

"We were all excited, but he was the same — calm," said Ambujam Satheesh, his manager at the body shop. "He was taking calls from the customers."

That calm has carried Basheer through an intense 24 hours of non-stop calls to his mobile phone. Two bankers even came to visit him at the workshop, ending their pitch for his cash with a request for a selfie that he obliged.

To Basheer, the money isn't life-changing, though it can help his partially paralyzed son, grown daughter, grandchildren and wife. He'll keep working until mandatory retirement and will try to create a program to help the poor by teaching them useful work skills.

"Don't rubbish that money by giving something to someone for free," the 37-year Dubai resident said. "If you're hard-working, you make the money valuable."

The interview over, Basheer walked past the gleaming Ford Mustangs in the body shop and returned to his desk. A moment later, the phone rang with a worried customer and he got back to work.

Follow Jon Gambrell on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellap. His work can be found at http://bigstory.ap.org/content/jon-gambrell .

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Indian villagers arrested over 'witchcraft' killings

08:59 EST, 7 September 2016 | dailymail.co.uk



MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

Two men are burned alive as punishment for 'using black magic to kill their neighbours' in India

- The victims were beaten up and then set on fire in eastern state of Orissa
- Seven people have been arrested over the murders of the two men
- Belief in witchcraft remains widespread in some remote areas of India
- Elsewhere, a 25-year-old man was allegedly killed in Thane, in west India, after he was beaten by three men to rid him of 'evil spirits'

By Afp and Thomas Burrows

Two men have been burned alive after being accused of using black magic to kill four villagers.

The victims were beaten up and then set on fire on Monday when they returned to their village in the eastern state of Orissa after fleeing in the wake of the accusations.

Seven people have been arrested over their murders.

Santosh Kumar Mishra, deputy police chief of Gajapati district, said: 'They had returned to the village and were caught by the mob.'



Two men have been burned alive after being accused of using black magic in India

He explained: 'They were accused of killing four villagers, including a child, using black magic.'

Experts say belief in witchcraft remains widespread in some impoverished and remote areas of India, where occasional incidents of human sacrifices have also been reported.

Elsewhere, a 25-year-old man was allegedly

killed in Thane, in west India, after he was beaten by three men to rid him of 'evil spirits'.

Thane Police PRO Sukhada Narkar told the Indian Express: 'The man was subjected to torture by a priest, his son and a transgender. They all beat him severely with sticks, rods, belt on the pretext of getting evil spirits off him after keeping him captive for hours. He died on the spot.'

All three have been arrested.

More than 2,000 people were killed in India on suspicion of witchcraft between 2000 and 2012, according to the most recent figures from the National Crime Records Bureau.

Many of the victims were women.

Some states have introduced special laws to try to curb crimes against people accused of witchcraft and superstition.



Comments (16)

misterloco07, Sheffield, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

DM showing only the really horrible parts of India. Every country has such elements though, in one form or another. Quite sad nevertheless

jbegan, Grass Valley, about 4 hours ago

We aren't that far off here: In U.S., 42% Believe Creationist View of Human Origins. It's a Lord Of The Flies thing.

Reader Swives, Hendrson, Australia, about 5 hours ago

It sounds like a DMer paradise - backward religious beliefs, violent punitive retributive justice...shame it's not white though, eh?

Cuffs357, Charlotte, United States, about 5 hours ago

This country is totally azz backwards.

india7, sydney, Australia, about 7 hours ago

yes and they bring there backward minds with them when they come here to live...cant stand them....

NJNative5256, Morristown, United States, about 9 hours ago

Just think, you can go and hop onto an airplane right now. You can go to this country and experience a place so bass ackwards

seasonofmadness, Chicago, United States, about 9 hours ago

What a backward and ignorant culture.

userpete86, IrvineCA, United States, about 10 hours ago

Women I know have been entranced by eat, pray, love and want to go there. I read stories like this and just mildly warn them without trying to seem like some paranoid weirdo.

Parade, Sauvie Island, United States, about 10 hours ago

Backward, ignorance.

Paul, MK Bucks, about 12 hours ago

How much aid do we send to this medieval dump?

misterloco07, Sheffield, United Kingdom, about 3 hours ago

Not like Indians require British aid. What you give us is peanuts when compared to the development costs a year. 1.2 billion people living here, youll deffo find all sorts.

Published by Associated Newspapers Ltd

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Uematsu cited Hitler's ideology, menaced care home for months before attacking residents | The Japan Times

japantimes.co.jp YOKOHAMA -

The Japan Times



A man bows while paying his respects in front of the Tsukui Yamayuri En care facility in Kanagawa on Thursday where Tuesday's knife attack took place.

man bows while paying his respects in front of the Tsukui Yamayuri En care facility in Kanagawa on Thursday where Tuesday's knife attack took place. | KYODO

Uematsu cited Hitler's ideology, menaced care home for months before attacking residents

• Jul 28, 2016

o Online: Jul 28, 2016 o Print: Jul 28, 2016

Last Modified: Jul 29, 2016

The knife-wielding attacker who slit the throats of dozens of residents at a care home for people with disabilities on Tuesday cited a belief in the ideology of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler during a brief period of hospitalization in February. He was so persistent in his threats that the facility installed extra security and kept in close contact with police.

A disabled people's lobby group has said the slaughter by suspect Satoshi Uematsu, 26, smacked of eugenics and came amid a background of hate speech, including against people with disabilities. The Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples' International said Japan needs to do more to create a fully inclusive society.

The slew of warning signs led some to question whether officials should have done more to prevent the attack.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met with ministers Thursday and ordered a thorough investigation.

"It's an incident that should not have happened," he said. "I will not tolerate it."

In other developments, the suspect was revealed to have begun his attack in a section staffed by female personnel, binding several staffers with zip ties before going room to room hacking residents to death.

He attacked 45 people, killing 19, in Japan's worst postwar mass killing.

Officials from the city of Sagamihara, Kanagawa Prefecture, said the Nazi references came when Uematsu, a former longtime worker at the facility, was hospitalized briefly this year.

He said he had been attracted to the philosophy of the Nazi ideologue, whose eugenics ideal included the extermination of people with disabilities.

"Hitler's philosophy dawned on me two weeks ago," Uematsu said on Feb. 20, according to a city official.

A day earlier, Uematsu told a Sagamihara city official that he was a follower of freemasonry. This and other recent behavior had prompted city officials to admit him to the hospital.

"There are 800 million people with disabilities worldwide," Uematsu told the official. "Money is spent on them. It should be used for other purposes."

The statements were seen as revealing Uematsu's darker side and spooked people so much that staff at the care home stepped up vigilance in the months that followed.

On Wednesday, executives of Kanagawa Kyodokai, which operates the facility, said the care home installed 16 security cameras on the advice of police and kept in consultation with officers.

So close was that contact, the executives said, that police came to understand that when an emergency call came it would be to do with Uematsu. Officers at Tsukui Police Station registered the facility's phone number and the cellphone of the security guard, so that whoever took the call would know immediately what was up.

The advice police gave was not to let Uematsu inside, and that staff should call as soon as he showed up.

For example, workers were particularly on edge during a local summer festival on June 4.

"Because he used to be in charge of the event, we were concerned that he might show up," said Kaoru Irikura, who heads the care facility. "I gave firm instructions to staffers to report it immediately if he dropped by."

Staff spent the day patrolling the venue to make sure Uematsu was not about. Since he lived nearby, the facility began assigning additional members of staff to accompany residents when they were out for a walk.

However, care home managers were not informed about the content of a letter that Uematsu had sent to the Lower House speaker in February, in which he said he planned to attack the facility and kill people.

"We wanted to prevent him from entering the facility. We didn't think there was imminent threat," said Miki Akagawa, a Kanagawa Kyodokai official.

Meanwhile, further details have been emerging of the bloody ordeal that unfolded in the early hours of Tuesday.

Investigative sources said Thursday that Uematsu broke into the complex by forcing his way into a

women-only area, most likely picking an entry point where he expected to meet less resistance, police and prefectural sources said.

There were 20 residents in the section, the building's east wing. He killed five of them.

A senior official at the prefectural government said Uematsu must have known there were only women in that unit and that it would be easy for him to enter. All staff in that section were also female.

He is suspected of slashing the residents there and then moving to the west wing, going upstairs to the second floor before escaping from the complex via its administrative wing.

At least five facility workers were tied up in the attack, staff said.

Security camera records show the suspected attacker leaving the facility at around 2:47 a.m. Tuesday. Uematsu turned himself into police shortly after 3 a.m.

Uematsu got a job at the care home as a temporary worker in December 2012 and went full time the following April.

It was not until Feb. 18 this year that he astonished co-workers by saying he thought all disabled people should be killed — and quit the following day.

On the day he ended work, the Sagamihara city government decided to commit Uematsu to a mental hospital out of concern that he could harm others.

He tested positive for marijuana and was diagnosed as suffering from a psychiatric illness exacerbated by the drug but was discharged about two weeks later as his condition was judged to have improved.

Following the incident, police raided Uematsu's home and found small bags carrying plant matter. possibly marijuana, the sources said. Investigators have taken urine from the suspect for a drug test.

The massacre has sparked outrage among groups representing disabled people.

The Japan National Assembly of Disabled Peoples' International said Wednesday it suspects the murder "was nothing but an act based on eugenics, which sees disabled people as those who should not exist."

Vowing to fight such ideas with "strong anger and deep sorrow," the group added that the murders occurred against a backdrop of hate speech and hate crimes against minorities, including the disabled.

"We need to work toward creating an inclusive society in which no one will be excluded," the group said.

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What was the mysterious UFO that bathed Hull in blue light?

September 11th 2016

hulldailymail.co.uk

By Hull Daily Mail | Posted: November 23, 2015



What was the mysterious object spotted over Hull in 1801?

What was the mysterious, fiery object that appeared in the skies above Hull, bathing the town in blue light? Mike Covell talks to Paul Johnson about the region's first UFO sighting.

It appeared suddenly over the Humber, an immense moon-like globe with a black bar across the centre of its face. For a moment it bathed Hull and the Humber in a mysterious blue light. Then, it split into seven smaller fireballs and vanished.

Was it a weather phenomenon, a comet, or Hull's first UFO sighting? To the people who witnessed it over the town in June 1801, it may even have seemed like a sign from God.

Local historian Mike Covell has conducted extensive research into local UFO reports.

He said: "The common misconception is that UFO sightings began in America in 1947, when Kenneth Arnold saw some unidentified objects flying over the Cascade Mountains. The famous Roswell incident – when an alien craft supposedly crashed in New Mexico – happened the same year.

"But in Hull we can trace the phenomena back to June 1801, when Hull and the Humber was the scene of one of the earliest sightings of an unidentified flying object. It featured in the local and national press and science periodicals."

After its initial disappearance, the UFO then reappeared "looking like the face of the moon", before again splitting into five circular balls of light, according to a report in the Hull Packet newspaper (below).

A most beautiful phenomenon was observed on Mike said: "Whatever it was came from the south-west Friday se'nnight, at Hull, from the S. W. re-fembling an immense moon, with a black bar it at the time. Could it have been a celestial object – a comet or a meteorite – or was it something else?"

It is not the only local case of its type to make headline what we are told of the face of the moon, afternews. Mike has built up an extensive collection of Useral final stars, which gradually fided away, clippings, from the 19th century to the present day. nated. During the time of its being visible, a In 1909, Hull became part of the so-called "Scareships" faint blue light fell upon the furrounding objects

towards Hull. There was a great deal of discussion about

news. Mike has built up an extensive collection of UFO

the that of diffact torches; and, when gone craze – sightings of unidentified airships, seen over a number of towns.

"In May 1909 these Scareships were witnessed over Hull, near Coltman Street, when a Mr Walker contacted the police and the press reporting what he had seen," said Mike.

"It flew over Hull and headed for the Humber but the next night other eyewitnesses reported the same thing, independent of each other, before Mr Walker's sighting had been reported in the press."

In 1913, the Scareships returned, arriving in Hull in February of that year before being seen all over the country.

Mike said: "The press reported that one had been seen hovering over Hull for an hour. Crowds of Hull residents, including policemen, stood and watched the object hovering over Paragon Station with red and white lights reported on the unidentified aerial object."

Of course, the sightings may simply have been test-flights of airships – unfamiliar technology to many at the time. UFO reports peaked in the 1940s, following the American sightings, and then again in the 1990s, probably because of the huge success of the X Files TV series.

One of the strangest cases was reported in 1967, when a UFO was said to have landed in a park on the Longhill estate.

"The story goes that on Wednesday, November 15, 1967, a group of Hull children saw a cigarshaped craft descend and hover over the park, leaving burn marks on a hill," said Mike.

"Two police officers on duty visited the 'landing site' and noticed burn marks on the hill but no sign of any such craft. Initially they thought the children had been up to no good but their stories were very consistent.

"Other eyewitnesses across Hull described seeing a cigar-shaped object flying over the city, while another eyewitness claimed it was a helicopter from the Yorkshire Electricity Board. The matter was never fully resolved."

Whatever is behind the sightings of UFOs, Mike believes they are unlikely to stop.

He said: "The new series of the X Files is on the way and so it wouldn't surprise me at all if a new generation start watching the skies and we get a whole new series of UFO reports."

MIKE Covell has collected hundreds of official reports of sightings from the National Archives.

One of the most credible reports involved several police officers in Hull, Hedon and Thorngumbald, who saw a light in the sky over Saltend.

A report dated October 17, 2002, details how officers saw an object which "appeared as the size of a 'normal' bright star but of different colours – blue, green, red and white", moved fast, stopped and started and changed shape. The lights began at 3am and were visible for around 45 minutes.

One Hull resident said the lights appeared to be "communicating" with each other.

UFOs were also spotted in the skies over Bransholme.

A beam of light was seen spinning around the sky on September 8, 1985. A round object was then reported to have risen from the ground.

It was described as being the size of a house, with a ring of red lights around its base. A humming noise accompanied the light show.

The object was seen heading east across fields flying at a height of about 50ft.

8 comments

blackadder | November 24 2015, 8:04AM

@Cravenstreet as I already said, it's drivel, you might as well believe in fairies at the bottom of your garden!

• wellingtonboo | November 23 2015, 12:49PM

Interesting. There was a similar story in the Leicester Chronicle in 1829 about a "moon" that split in half, and in that case human-like figures seemed to emerge. This was along the Leeds-York road and is described in a new book, Return to Magonia, a detailed and pretty hard-headed study of so-called UFOs in history (http://tinyurl.com/p2qd9nn). Mostly these things turn out to be fireball meteors and the like, but they're still interesting. And some turn out to be stranger.

• lanm hull | November 23 2015, 11:10AM

They develop the civilization and technology that supports intergalactic travel, then find us, then travel all the way here to.. what, make contact? Subjugate us to their superiority and conquer earth? NO! To dick about with some lights and nick off. THAT is why if you see some funny lights but no Aliens, it's NOT ALIENS!!!

beany 007 | November 23 2015, 9:20AM

They visited and thought....nah... no Intelligent life here.

Wyvenhoe | November 23 2015, 4:09AM

Probably Isis doing a recon run ...

Ultio | November 22 2015, 10:34PM

It certainly wasn't from cop cars, given the ongoing cuts, anyway...

Cravenstreet | November 22 2015, 8:26PM

Black adder if you are so adamant it is rubbish and you wasn't there, why shouldn't people who were not there believe in what is said, after all it is only opinions today because there is no proof

blackadder | November 22 2015, 1:02PM

What a load of drivel! Sign from god my backside!

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Exit plan: University boss installs escape hatch following student protests | Fox News foxnews.com

Published August 09, 2016

The chancellor at University of California Berkeley has an exit plan in case student protesters storm his office.

Nicholas Dirks, the school's chancellor, installed a \$9,000 escape hatch in a hallway outside his office to "provide egress" if potential student protesters descend on the administration building, according to the campus newspaper, The Daily Californian.

The emergency exit -- built late last month -- was ordered in response to an April 2015 protest during which students stormed the chancellor's suite and staged a sit-in outside his office, the paper reported. Students reportedly banged on desks and chanted loudly before being escorted out of the building, some in handcuffs.

Campus spokeswoman Claire Holmes confirmed construction of the door inside California Hall, telling the paper it was installed as a safety measure to "provide egress to leave the building."

The new door did not sit well with some students at the public university.

"There has to be other ways to handle student concerns and protests than simply building ways to avoid them," ASUC Senator-elect Chris Yamas told the paper.

"The chancellor seems elitist and out of touch and inaccessible to the students." Yamas said.

Student protests have erupted on the grounds of the California university for decades, but none ever resulted in a chancellor being physically harmed, Yamas said.

Funds for the escape hatch were approved by the school's president under Be Smart About Safety, a university-wide pool of money set aside for risk prevention.

The door was also roundly criticized in an Aug. 1 staff editorial published by the school paper.

"The money used to construct the exit, while not substantial relative to other UC construction projects, came from a pool of funding to be allocated toward risk services, including protections for campus employees," the editorial said. "It's concerning that, at a time when campus safety is a national issue and UC Berkeley affiliates are frequently the victims of crimes on and near campus, campus is focusing risk prevention efforts at the uppermost level."

The new escape door was installed four months after the school finished building a \$700,000 security fence around University House, Dirks' private residence, to keep out student protesters.

The Daily Californian reported that student activists protesting for workers' rights marched to the chancellor's house last November and jumped over the fence while it was still under construction. The protesters proceeded to vandalize the property -- with some throwing burning torches.

University officials, meanwhile, have insisted that he door was requested by the staff, not Dirks, according to multiple reports. University spokesman Dan Mogulof told The Guardian that the term "escape hatch" was a "concoction of a 19-year-old headline writer."

"It's a door," Mogulof told the website.

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US Olympic committee bullying unofficial sponsors who use hashtags

Olivia Solon in San Francisco Friday 22 July 2016 Last modified on Friday 22 July 2016

theguardian.com

USOC sent letters to companies that don't have a commercial relationship with them, warning use of #TeamUSA and #Rio2016 is stealing intellectual property



The Olympic rings placed at Madureira Park in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Photograph: Buda Mendes/Getty **Images**

The United States Olympic Committee (USOC) has been using legal bullying tactics to try and prevent companies that aren't official sponsors of the Games from using "official" Twitter hashtags such as #TeamUSA and #Rio2016.

Over the last few weeks, the USOC has sent letters to companies that sponsor athletes but don't have a commercial relationship with the USOC or the International Olympic Committee, warning them against stealing intellectual property.

One of these letters, written by USOC chief marketing officer Lisa Baird and obtained by ESPN, states: "Commercial entities may not post about the Trials or Games on their corporate social media accounts. This restriction includes the use of USOC's trademarks in hashtags such as #Rio2016 or #TeamUSA."

The mean-spirited approach is designed to protect the cash-cow sponsors – such as Coca Cola, McDonald's, GE, P&G, Visa and Samsung – who fork out for marketing presence at the event.

It's been possible to trademark hashtags in the US since 2013, but intellectual property lawyers like Mark Terry say that the USOC is wrong to try to apply the law to those tweeting hashtags. "The USOC is alleging that commercial entities are using these hashtags and that's trademark infringement," Terry told the Guardian. "I think it's completely bogus."

"Trademark infringement occurs when another party uses a trademark and confuses the public as to the source of a product or service that's being used in commerce. That's not what happens when you use a hashtag. I'm not selling a product or service, I'm just making statements on an open forum. How else do you indicate you are talking about the Rio 2016 Olympics without saying #Rio2016?"

The USOC could have a trademark case if a company was pretending to be a headline sponsor when it fact it wasn't, but most uses of these hashtags appear to be companies wishing athletes luck on Twitter.

The same letter sent by the USOC reminds companies (except for those involved in news media) that they can't reference any Olympic results or share or repost anything from the official Olympic account.

This is where the USOC is wrong. As Timothy Geigner at Techdirt points out, there is no applicable part of trademark law that applies to facts such as sporting results. Furthermore, the restrictions on retweeting make absolutely no sense in the context of social media which is designed to be, you

know, social.

Much of this silliness comes down to Rule 40 of the Olympic Charter. In previous Olympics, the rule barred athletes from tweeting about non-official sponsors for a month around the Games. And nonsponsors weren't allowed to feature Olympic athletes that they had sponsorship deals with in their ads during that time.

In 2015, Rule 40 was relaxed ever-so-slightly to allow athletes to appear in generic advertising that doesn't explicitly mention the games or use any Olympic IP, which includes terms such as "Rio", "medal", "performance", "victory" and "gold".

Sportswear brand Oiselle was contacted by the USOC when it used a photo of athlete Kate Grace, who the company sponsors, after she won the 800 metres at Olympic trials.

Oiselle CEO Sally Bergen told ESPN that the heavy-handed brand policing was "ridiculous" and that the rules hurt athletes. Companies like Oiselle can't afford to sponsor athletes if they can't leverage the relationship in their communications.

The USOC did not respond to a request for comment.

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Scientists have found bees nesting in ash on the rim of Masaya volcano, fed almost exclusively by a single species of wildflower.

Active volcanoes don't usually seem like valuable real estate. If the looming risk of eruption isn't scary enough, there's the intense heat, sloshing lava and acidic gases, all rising from a murky moonscape that offers few, if any, signs of life.

Ecosystems can emerge in surprising places, though, if a few brave pioneers lay the foundation. And at one caldera in Nicaragua, scientists have discovered an amazing new example: hundreds of bees living on the lip of an active volcano, getting almost all their food from a single wildflower species adapted to volcanic acid rain.

The bees are Anthophora squammulosa, a solitary, ground-nesting species native to North and Central America. Led by ecologist Hilary Erenler from the University of Northampton in the U.K., the study's authors found the bees nesting "within meters of an active volcanic crater," they write in the journal Pan-Pacific Entomologist. Female bees dig tunnels into volcanic ash to lay their eggs — a habitat so inhospitable the study describes the insects as extremophiles.

"The nest location is exposed to continuous, strongly acidic gas emissions," according to Erenler and her co-authors, "and sporadic vent-clearing episodes that blanket the surrounding area with ash and tephra."

The volcano is Masaya, a 635-meter (2,083-foot) shield volcano known for frequent eruptions. Researchers found the bees nesting in volcanic ash by a crater named Santiago, which is "one of the world's strongest sources of sulfur dioxide" (SO2), they note in their study about the discovery. These gas plumes are highly acidic, they add, "creating a clearly defined 'kill zone' under which vegetation is either entirely suppressed or partly damaged, depending on proximity to the source."



Masaya volcano, Nicaragua

Masaya volcano is highly active, with about 20 eruptions recorded over the past century. (Photo: Jorge Mejía Peralta/Flickr)

SO2 is known to cause a variety of problems for bees, they add, such as reduced foraging activity, slower development of larvae, lower survival of pupae and less longevity in adults. Around the Masaya bee nests, SO2 levels were detected ranging from 0.79 to 2.73 parts per million (ppm), but previous studies have shown damage to bees from SO2 levels as low as 0.28 ppm. The researchers don't know how A. squammulosa can live in this environment, where SO2 levels peak at 10

times that level, noting more research will be needed to reveal the bees' survival secrets.

What do they eat?

Since the bees live in Masaya's "kill zone," the researchers wanted to find out where they get nectar. They searched for any flowers within 725 meters (2,378 feet) of the nest area, trying to mimic the distance traveled by a foraging bee. They also looked for bees returning to their nests, capturing 10 and swabbing pollen from their legs.

The flower search turned up 14 plant species, although the captured bees told a different story: Of all the pollen in those 10 samples, more than 99 percent came from a single wildflower species, Melanthera nivea. This hardy member of the daisy family ranges from the Southeastern U.S. to South America, and past research has revealed adaptations that help it tolerate volcanic acid rain.



Melanthera nivea wildflower growing in Nicaragua

The bees seem to rely almost entirely on *Melanthera nivea*, also known as snow squarestem. (Photo: Dick Culbert/Flickr)

Why do they live there?

A. squammulosa wasn't known to nest in volcanic ash until now, nor was any species in its genus. In fact, the behavior has only been reported in a few other bees, and there's a key difference, the authors say. Previous reports of ash-nesting bees came from exposed roadsides in Guatemala, about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from the nearest volcanic vent. This population of *A. squammulosa*, on the other hand, nests just meters away from a gasspewing crater in a volcanic kill zone.

Of course, this habitat poses "several distinct challenges," the researchers write. They cite high SO2 levels as the main danger, but also note insects can be hurt by volcanic ash itself. A 1975 study of ash eruptions in Costa Rica showed that abrasive ash wore down insects' exoskeletons, while ingesting ash-contaminated pollen and nectar caused physical and chemical damage. An eruption could also wipe out the Masaya bees, either directly or by killing the plants that seem to be their only food source



scientists studying bees at Masaya volcano

Acidic gases from Masaya could be dangerous for bees, but may also help limit predators. (Photo: Hilary Erenler)

But living by an active volcano has perks, too. Ground-nesting bees avoid nesting near plants with fastgrowing roots, which can break up their underground tunnels, and seem to like habitats with sparse vegetation. "The warm open area on a relatively gentle slope with a distinct lack of vegetation and a loose substrate may provide ideal nesting conditions," the authors

suggest. And while a few predators do prey on the bees, "their density and activity may also be impaired by the high levels of gas."

The Masaya bees still have a dangerous lifestyle, but protection from natural predators would be a big advantage. And if volcanic gases can do that, maybe they offer other benefits, too? Bees may not live on Masaya to escape humans, but given the growing dangers we pose to bees around the world — via habitat loss, insecticide use and invasive species — they're lucky to live anywhere that scares us.

Russell McLendon (@russmclendon) writes about humans and other wildlife.

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Revealed: How a weather forecast in 1967 stopped nuclear war

10 Aug 2016 at 00:28, lain Thomson

theregister.co.uk



Solar storm that nearly turned the world hot

For the first time, retired US Air Force officers have published [PDF] an account of an incident on May 23, 1967 when a solar storm nearly fooled American high command into thinking that a Soviet nuclear attack was on the way.

On that day, the US military nuclear command went into panic mode when signals from all three of the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) sites in the far northern hemisphere (one apiece at Alaska, Thule in Greenland, and a base in the UK's county of Yorkshire) shut down simultaneously.

These BMEWS stations were positioned over the most likely routes for Soviet ICBMs to come visiting the Land of the Free, and some thought the USSR had worked out a jamming technology that would blind the US ahead of an attack.

The US wouldn't have been completely defenseless. Since 1960 the military had been running Operation Chrome Dome, a never-ending nuclear-equipped bombing fleet that loitered constantly around the US ready to fly to targets in the USSR. If the Cold War ever turned hot, these bombers provided a valuable retaliatory force, and more aircraft were on standby to take to the skies as needed.

When the BMEWS went down, this secondary bomber force was put on alert and flash warnings were sent to other nuclear facilities warning them that this might be the big one. But luckily a message from a series of forecasts made it through to central command telling them that it might not be the Soviets causing the issues.

"This is a grave situation," said Delores Knipp, a space physicist at the University of Colorado in Boulder, and coauthor of the paper. "But here's where the story turns: things were going horribly wrong, and then something goes commendably right."

Since the 1940s, the US military planners had had evidence of how solar radiation could affect communications systems here on earth. In the mid-1960s the Air Force's Air Weather Service (AWS) had been doing regular solar forecasts to spot this kind of radiation.

On May 18, 1967 the AWS spotted an unusually large group of sunspots with intense magnetic fields in one region of the sun. Shortly afterwards this area erupted, causing one of the largest solar storms ever recorded flying towards earth.

"I specifically recall responding with excitement, 'Yes, half the sun has blown away,' and then related the event details in a calmer, more quantitative way," said retired Colonel Arnold Snyder, a solar forecaster at NORAD's Solar Forecast Center, who was on duty that day.

The loss of the BMEWS was flashed both to the military and to government heads. Knipp says that contemporary documents indicate that President Johnson would have received the news. Given the heightened state of alert at the time – Vietnam's summer offensives weren't going well and forces were massing in the Middle East for the Six Day War that broke out days later - the news could have scared some folks into pushing the button.

"Had it not been for the fact that we had invested very early on in solar and geomagnetic storm observations and forecasting, the impact [of the storm] likely would have been much greater," Knipp said. "This was a lesson learned in how important it is to be prepared." ®

The Register

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I Went on a Weeklong Cruise For Conspiracy Theorists

popularmechanics.com



I Went on a Weeklong Cruise For Conspiracy Theorists. It Ended Poorly.

What do you get when you stick some of the conspiracy world's biggest celebrities and their die-hard fans on a cruise ship in the middle of the Pacific Ocean for a week? Some fascinating insight into our strange times. And one near fistfight.

Created with Sketch. By Bronwen Dickey AUG 17, 2016

It was a bit after seven, and I should have been downstairs on Plaza Deck, dressed in formal attire and enjoying dinner with the conspiracy theorists. There were about a hundred of them, and they were nearing the end of their week—the last week in January—aboard the *Ruby Princess*. Many of them were older people, and each of them had paid \$3,000 (not including airfare and beverages on board) to participate in the first-ever Conspira-Sea Cruise, a weeklong celebration of "alternative science" hosted by a tour company called Divine Travels. For the past five days, they had debated UFOs, GMOs, government mind-control programs, vaccines, chemtrails, crop circles, and the Illuminati's plan for world domination, all while soaking up the mystical energies of three Mexican tourist towns known mainly for wet T-shirt contests and Señor Frog's.

But I was not on Plaza Deck. I was locked in my stateroom on Baja Deck, picking at a room-service cheeseburger. Earlier that afternoon, a pair of Conspira-Sea presenters had chased me—chased me—from a conference room. This wasn't our first confrontation, and now I feared they were tracking me around the ship, waiting to spring out from blind corners and empty doorways.

Understand that I don't consider myself the paranoid type. Although when I had come across the Conspira-Sea Cruise on a science blog a few months earlier, I'd known I wanted to go, but not because I fear dark forces are out to get me. I used to love *The X-Files*, and the prospect of discussing Roswell and JFK over piña coladas sounded like fun. So did getting to know some devoted conspiracy wonks. Wondering whether the world is actually as it seems is a uniquely American sport, and there's plenty of evidence that's worth wondering about—this is the country of Watergate and the Tuskegee experiments and the NSA tapping your phone.

But the *Ruby Princess* was no place for casual wonderers. The *Ruby Princess* was for people who scraped together three grand to be reassured that their fears and suspicions and theories aren't the lonely fever dreams of basement-dwelling outcasts, that those fears and suspicions are valid, and that others share them. It would be like a weeklong, in-person internet chat room.

A predinner prayer in the ship's Michelangelo Dining Room. Dina Litovsky

Not that that's necessarily a good thing. Chat rooms can be terrifying (virtual) places, rabbit holes of self-reinforcing misinformation. Dip your toe into Reddit or Disgus and you will be bombarded with



proof that Bigfoot lives in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest and that our government is run by giant lizards posing as politicians. Charlatans with slick websites can now manipulate data, doctor images, and fabricate documents, collecting thousands of followers. But it's not fair to dismiss all conspiracy theorists as web-dependent crackpots, and there's a difference between caution and paranoia—between reasonable skepticism and a wholesale rejection of scientific method. I didn't know what I'd find on this cruise. One of the great blessings of the internet is that it

helps us find people who are like us, or who seem to be like us. For example, there are casual Phillies fans, and then there are the kind of Phillies fans who spend endless hours on Phillies fan websites e-conversing with the equally obsessed. Likewise there are people who kind of wonder, fleetingly, whether Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone before their thoughts return to work and family and whether to take the freeway or the local roads. And then there are people who fly far from home, at great expense, to spend a week on the Conspira-Sea Cruise.

Somewhere in the middle was me, deadbolted in my room. Paranoid.

"Death is not real," he said. "That's the biggest bunch of crap on earth."

On a brighter, happier afternoon five days earlier, I boarded the *Ruby Princess* in San Pedro, California. Flanked by the port's grimy regiment of industrial smokestacks, the ship gleamed majestic white and soared almost two hundred feet into the air. She could accommodate more than three thousand passengers, occupying them with four swimming pools, twelve dining rooms and restaurants, an outdoor movie screen, two nightclubs, a full-service spa, and enough rococo baubles to satisfy Liberace. The ship's central atrium and its giant spiral staircase glittered like a pageant crown. Every corridor stretched into eternity, with identical stairwells crosshatching all nineteen decks.

"I'm so glad you made it!" said Adele McIntosh, the tour company's travel agent, when I finally located the Conspira-Sea check-in desk. She gave me a tight hug, then handed me my name tag and an orientation packet. When I wrote "Popular Mechanics" on my sign-in form, a woman to Adele's right shuffled some papers and nodded approvingly.

"Wonderful to have you with us," the woman said. "We're only now beginning to understand the quantum realm."

The week's seminars appeared to be split into two broad categories. There were those with a magical or highly new age component: "Astral Possession, Psychic Vampirism, and Exorcism," "Gaia-Sophia, Timelines and Global Alchemy," "How to Control the World with Mind Machines." And then there were those that detailed concrete, terrestrial dangers: "Are GMOs and Roundup Causing Disease in Millions?" "Vaccinations: Do You Really Know What's Coming Through That Needle?" A subset of the second group concerned itself with the U.S. legal and banking systems. Unfortunately, the nightly UFO watches had to be canceled because the man who was to lead them had recently suffered a stroke.



Inside my orientation tote bag was a shiny blue bracelet I was supposed to wear at all times. "Makes it easier to find members of the group," Adele said. But that wasn't necessary. Most of the cruisers—the vacationers, not our group—were generally outfitted in bright colors and loud prints. As the days passed, a lot of them began wearing novelty captain's hats from the gift shop. The conspiracy group, on the other hand, was mostly serious-looking senior citizens in "Infowars" T-shirts. Some of them wore casts, others walked with canes. Two relied on motorized scooters. None

looked like he or she could afford to spend money frivolously. One eighty-year-old man's toes poked through the tops of his worn leather loafers.

I headed to the windowless conference room that had been temporarily renamed the Liberty Lab.

"Welcome everyone," said Dr. Susan Shumsky, the founder of Divine Travels and (claim to fame) one-time personal staff member of Beatles' guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. (Her doctorate in divinity is from the Teaching of Intuitional Metaphysics in San Diego.) "I'd like to begin with a prayer." Nearly everything the woman wore was either bright pink or sparkled. "Breathe in divine light!" she said. We closed our eyes and inhaled. Across the hall, in Gatsby's Casino, slot machines clanged to a piped-in soundtrack of Taylor Swift and Rihanna.

Then sixteen presenters introduced themselves and gave brief synopses of their seminars. Laura Eisenhower—great-granddaughter of Dwight!—said she had been invited in 2006 to join a secret American colony on Mars and that aliens, including some prominent U.S. politicians, are already living on earth in disguise. Dannion Brinkley, a *New York Times* best-selling author, announced that he had risen from the dead three times, the first after a lightning strike that sent him on a twenty-eight-minute sojourn through the afterlife. "Death is not real," he said. "That's the biggest bunch of crap on earth." Winston Shrout spoke of "commercial redemption," a philosophy that promises each American citizen access to giant piles of secret money.

"Generally I do speak from a little bit of a higher level," Shrout drawled in a thick Kentucky accent. "Because to understand commercial redemption, you have to go into the fifth, and even sixth, dimensions."

The attendees scribbled in their notebooks and eagerly circled items on the schedule. There were pitches for wishing machines, astrological charts, and dowsing rods, followed by screeds against Big Pharma and Monsanto. Sean David Morton, whom AM radio host Art Bell called America's Prophet, vowed to help us get out of debt while sticking it to the American court system. (He did not mention that in 2010 he was sued by the Securities and Exchange Commission for telling a group of investors that he could psychically predict the stock market or that he tried to escape fraud charges by declaring himself the ambassador of a nonexistent country called the Republic of New Lemuria.)

The biggest name on the program was Andrew Wakefield, the discredited former British gastroenterologist who wrote a highly controversial (and since retracted) 1998 paper that claimed to find an association between the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine and autism in twelve children. The U.K.'s General Medical Council stripped Wakefield of his license in 2010, by which



time he was living in the U.S. where he had assumed rock-star status among the growing American anti-vaccine movement.

Wakefield was superficially charming, if a bit weary. "The story of my life is basically how to take a perfectly good career and flush it down the toilet," he said.

Later that night, in the Michelangelo Dining Room, Dannion Brinkley was sitting under an airbrushed painting of Poseidon. He is sixfoot-four, and the flowing scarf under his sport

coat gave him the appearance of an aging linebacker who had just returned from an ashram. Several fans were gathered around him. He motioned me over warmly and I sat down.

"What is your motive for being here," he asked, "and what is your intention?"

Puzzled, I looked to the young man on my left, who said he was an orthodontist from Calgary named Leo. He leaned over and whispered in my ear, "Dannion can immediately tell if people are on the right frequency, like tuning a radio. He's trying to figure out what frequency you're on."

"I'm a reporter for Popular Mechanics," I told Dannion, "and I'm here to learn about the conspiracy community."

He beamed and started telling me about his lightning strike. "Whether or not you believe me doesn't matter," Dannion said. "Because ultimately I'm going to win the argument. You are not going to die, and some of us can get up from the dead."

Before he could elaborate, a pair of presenters, Leonard "Len" Horowitz and his girlfriend, Sherri Kane, breezed into the room and sat down at our table. Online, they call themselves "The Horokane." Len bore a strong resemblance to the Count from *Sesame Street,* if you had frozen the Count in 1974 and dressed him in Hawaiian shirts. A former dentist from New Jersey with a degree in public health from Harvard, he is most well-known for writing a 1996 book that theorized the AIDS and Ebola viruses are genocidal weapons engineered by the U.S. government to depopulate the planet through vaccination programs. On the cruise, however, he would be lecturing on the key to lifelong health and world peace: the "miracle frequency" of 528 hertz.

According to Len, everything in the universe emits vibrations, and all the positive, life-affirming forces (including the green/yellow light in rainbows) "resonate" at a frequency of 528 hertz. Therefore, all music should be tuned in 528 hertz, rather than the 440 hertz of standard tuning, which he asserted was an evil plot imposed by the Rockefeller Foundation to militarize the world's populace. Len believes that standard tuning aggravates the pineal gland, making all of us emotionally distressed, sicker, and more destructive. He called this "musical cult control."

"You," he said to me, and then paused. "Are ... a ... digital, bio-holo-*graph*-ic, precipitation, crystallization ... mi-*rac*-ulous manifestation! Of divine frequency vibrations, forming harmonically in hydrospace."

"Okay," I said.

"That's the frequency that monks used to chant in while making brandy," Dannion added.

Len's face lit up. "When was that?"

"In the 1340s," Dannion said.

"And how do you know that?" Len asked.

Dannion dabbed at the corners of his mouth with his napkin and said, "Because when you die, you know these things. I saw it when I crossed over."

Sherri introduced herself as an investigative reporter who "defected from Fox News." A pretty blond much younger than Len, she seemed to be the great love of his life. "If it weren't for her," Len said, "I might not have known that my ex-wife was working with the CIA to undermine me." (Reached by email, Len's ex-wife denied these allegations.)

"How do you know I'm not working for the CIA?" I joked.

Sherri waved the question off, laughing. "Because trust me, it would be obvious. If you were a plant, I would *know*."



Cruisegoers paid around \$3,000 for the weeklong trip. Not including umbrella drinks. Dina Litovsky

When the ship lurched away from the dock and the ice cubes in our water glasses chimed under the drone of the propellers, Dannion requested that we all join hands to pray. Len lowered his voice and leaned across the table

"The real question," he said, "is whether, after you've learned the truth about all this stuff,

your editors at Popular Mechanics will even let you write it."

The next morning, shortly before Wakefield's lecture "Whistleblowing in the Public Interest," a tall, lean man wearing a shiny blue bracelet stood near the elevators. His name was Larry Cook. A soft-spoken fifty-one-year-old anti-vaccination activist from Los Angeles, he said he had joined the trip specifically to meet Wakefield, whom he regarded as something of a personal hero.

"The media has tried to destroy Andy," Larry said as he walked toward the back of a dining room where about fifteen other people were clustered. "But it's all lies and character assassination. We don't *need* drugs and vaccines. If we adopt a healthier lifestyle, we can regain our health without using them. Think about it: If vaccines actually worked, then why do these diseases still exist at all?"

The seminar began. For an hour, Wakefield paced in front of a projection screen, which ballooned his shadow to giant proportions. Slides of children born without arms and others screaming in pain flashed behind him.

"Your bodies are owned by Big Pharma," he said. "It's turning into a science-fiction movie." The audience gasped and shook their heads in disbelief. "This will be the end of the United States of America." During the Q&A portion, Wakefield added, "This is a deliberate eugenics program, a deliberate population-control program."

I looked around the room. People were sitting and listening attentively. For the first two days, I was heartened by how open and friendly most of the group was, even if they sometimes said surprising things. They told me about their lives and how they were drawn to the conspiracy community.

"Ever since I was little, I've just known that something was off," a fit, stylish forty-seven-year-old office manager named Cary told me. "That we aren't being told everything. My family doesn't believe me, but they are totally brainwashed."

I asked her why she thought the government was poisoning its own citizens with vaccines and GMOs.

"Because they want to f--king kill us!" she said.

Not everyone was as cynical. Missy and Ron Hill were a married couple from Florida. Missy had a tousled thatch of short blond hair and wore a black leather jacket. Ron wore sandals and floppy fishing hats. The two had met in church roughly fifteen years ago. When Ron, a truck driver for a cryogenics company, was assigned longer runs, Missy went to truck-driving school so that they could see the country together. It was out on the open road that the couple began listening to the late-night AM radio show *Coast to Coast AM*, hosted by Art Bell, who is best known for broadcasting interviews with UFO researchers from a remote station in the middle of the Nevada desert.

"There was so much stuff I had never realized was going on," Ron said. "After that, we were kind of hooked, I guess." The couple's interest in "star gates" and global energy fields inspired them to travel to places like Ireland, France, and Spain. Unlike some of the other cruisers, they explored the world rather than hiding from it.

As the week went on, word spread among the participants that I was writing for a magazine that often covered the world of science. First, Susan Shumsky informed me and Dina Litovsky, the photographer on the story, that Wakefield had requested we not attend the preliminary screening of his documentary, *Injecting Lies*, which alleges that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has ironclad evidence that vaccines are linked to autism but has chosen to hide this alarming connection from the public. (Months later, the film—its title changed to *Vaxxed: From Cover-Up to Catastrophe*—would cause a heated national debate when it was accepted, then rejected, by the Tribeca Film Festival. In reviews, *Variety* called it a "scientifically dubious hodgepodge of free-floating paranoia" while *The Guardian* said it was "probably headed straight to the junkheap with all the other conspiracy films." Only when contacted by Popular Mechanics' research department five months later did Wakefield—through his publicist—offer to send me a link to the film.) Then we were asked by Jeffrey Smith, an anti-GMO activist whose previous career involved "yogic flying," to leave two other panels. After that, attendees began ducking out of photos and complaining about Dina's flash.

On Tuesday morning, we sat down in the front row of a presentation we had not yet been barred from: Len Horowitz's lecture on 528 hertz. While Len fussed with the projector, Sherri set out boxes of nutritional supplements and crystal pyramids for sale. Their flagship product, OxySilver, retailed

for \$49.40. It contained one listed ingredient: purified water, though its nutritional table also included 5 micrograms of colloidal silver.



Despite widespread seasickness, most of the week's presentations in the Liberty Lab were full.

Dina Litovsky

"I took some OxySilver, and I'm already feeling better!" a woman in a scooter who'd suffered a recent bout of cancer announced to the room.

Dressed in a black velour jacket and white shirt with a butterfly collar, Len walked over to me. "I just want you to know that if you

degrade and disparage me and libel me in your article," he said, "I will devote everything I have to exposing Popular Mechanics and the people behind it."

"I'm not here to degrade anyone, Len," I said. I was somewhat in shock, because our conversation at dinner the first night had been so pleasant. "And certainly not to libel them. What is going on?"

"I am living a *nightmare!*" he sputtered, his voice rising like water starting to boil. "Every day of my life is like a roller coaster in *The Twilight Zone*. But I do this because I will not stand by and *watch this genocide!*" His eyes began to fill with tears. "I think that people should be able to choose how they are going to die, and not be *wiped out by the government!*"

The initial thrill of a tropical vacation soon curdled into tension and distrust.

Maybe it was the claustrophobia of all those small, windowless rooms. Or the seasickness that seemed to claim more Conspira-Sea participants by the day. I saw fewer of them relaxing by the pool or playing Texas Hold'em. At breakfast one morning, a woman whose father had survived the Holocaust told me that she broke down in tears when another cruiser claimed it never happened.

We were bobbing on the waters of pure insanity.

(One bright spot: During a day trip to the Las Labradas petroglyphs—carvings etched into large boulders on a beach near Mazatlán—Larry Cook calmly mentioned that the reason few people were now talking to me was that I was "pro-vaccine." We had a civil conversation about the issue—me conceding I was swayed by scientific consensus and the mountain of rigorously controlled peer-reviewed studies that have proved vaccines to be safe and effective, Larry remaining skeptical. Neither of us changed our minds, but we didn't get into a heated shouting match or assault each other's motives. In the two-dimensional world of the internet, it is easy for people on the opposite sides of a controversy to become ciphers to be vanquished rather than human beings with legitimate questions and concerns. It's much harder to dismiss someone right in front of you, a person whose story you know.)

That night the ocean whipped itself into twelve-foot swells. Even more people grew seasick. Still, there were enough to pack the Liberty Lab for the Horokane's screening of their documentary about the Paris terrorist attack on the Bataclan concert hall in November 2015, which they maintained was

part of one large false-flag operation. It turned out to be a plotless pastiche of Hollywood movie trailers (*Wag the Dog, Our Brand Is Crisis*), interview segments with survivors of the Bataclan theater attack downloaded from YouTube, and clips of Sherri and Len talking in front of a green screen that had been digitally rendered to look like a news desk. Drawings of Satan and banners denouncing the militant media scrolled behind Sherri's head, as did several advertisements for Len's supplement company, Healthy World Organization.

The film's central thesis went like this: Hollywood superagent Ari Emanuel (who represents Eagles of Death Metal, the band that was playing at the Bataclan when it was attacked) was in cahoots with the Lagardère Group, a French media conglomerate that had purchased the Bataclan in September 2015. Because Qatar Holding has a stake in Lagardère, and because the government of Qatar has been criticized for tacitly allowing terrorist groups to do their banking in the United Arab Emirates, and because—and this is where they totally lost me—Ari Emanuel is the brother of Rahm Emanuel, the mayor of Chicago, the Horokane believed that Lagardère must have orchestrated the attack with the help of Ari Emanuel.



A sign that was held up to presenters to keep them on schedule.

Dina Litovsky

When the film ended, Sherri grabbed the microphone. Her face had turned into a grim, ugly mask, the corners of her mouth pulled downward as if by strings.

"I don't want anybody to leave the room right now," she said. "I have a question." She pointed at Dina, our photographer, who was circling the room taking pictures.

"Come up here," Sherri said. "I want you to tell everybody who you work for."

"I'm with Popular Mechanics," Dina said. "Everybody knows that."

As though she were talking to a small child, Sherri continued, "And can you tell everybody what Popular Mechanics has to do with a *conspiracy cruise?*"

Someone in the audience interrupted, "You know she's the photographer, not the reporter?"

"Let me ask the questions, okay!" Sherri snapped, turning back to Dina. "And can you tell everyone why Popular Mechanics would be interested in people like us?"

Dina just smiled. "What, you don't think you are interesting?"

"You're taking photos so that you can label us conspiracy theorists!"

Dannion Brinkley groaned. "Let's keep it in 528, y'all," he said.

A woman named Abbie, who taught free yoga classes every morning, also stepped in. "That's enough, guys," she said.

"And who are you?" Sherri said.

"She's a plant!" someone yelled from the audience.

Eyes rolled. Heads shook. People filtered out.

Someone muttered, "She's the yoga teacher."

When we arrived at the Liberty Lab the next afternoon, Len accosted Dina in the doorway. His eyes were the size of dinner plates.

"I want you to see something!" he shouted as he tried to force a packet of papers into her hands, then mine. They were articles from Popular Mechanics debunking bad science. Apparently Len and Sherri had been up all night Googling the magazine and printing out documents in the ship's computer center. There was also a Wikipedia entry that linked the magazine's parent company, Hearst, to the Lagardère Group.

I tried to laugh it off and go around him, but Len wouldn't let me pass.

"Look at this!" he shouted, his face contorting with rage. "Look at this! *This is why you're here!* You're here in *bad faith!*"

Larry Cook, who had also been milling around in the hallway, stepped in front of Len to keep him from lunging at me.

"Get your hands off me!" Len shouted at him. "Get your f--king hands off me!"



Attendee Larry Cook (left) defends the Popular Mechanics team from presenters Len Horowitz and Sherri Kane.

Dina Litovsky

Armed with a camera, Sherri darted out from behind Len and chased me around the hallway, demanding that I explain myself. As I tried to block my face from the camera, I got trapped against the wall between Len and Larry, who seemed seconds away from a full-on brawl.

"If you don't stop this, I'm calling security," Larry said. Len then challenged Larry to a fistfight in the ship's gym.

That's when I ducked out of the corridor, fled Fiesta Deck, and dead-bolted myself in my cabin for the rest of the night. We had sailed far from the Mexican coast, over reason's horizon. We were now bobbing around on the waters of pure insanity.

The hallway showdown turned the rest of the trip into a blur. Wakefield chummily invited me and Dina to his third presentation, which we declined, only to learn from others who attended that he had planned to ambush us by reading aloud from Popular Mechanics. Dannion Brinkley "read my energies" by giving me a long hug. "You were flowing beautifully just then," he said. "But you're

putting love out there to someone who isn't giving it back. You're giving this person too much power. You need someone who can appreciate you ... like me!" Winston Shrout, in his farewell lecture, reasserted his position as the third-dimensional delegate to the Galactic Roundtable, noting that many of his clients were "fairies and elves." I learned from Laura Eisenhower that Hillary Clinton may have a supernatural agenda for world domination. "She's not even human," Eisenhower said. "You don't want to know what she is."

I also witnessed something called the Baked Alaska Parade. It was the final night of the cruise. I was eating dinner with Dina in the Da Vinci Dining Room, taking long pulls on overpriced beer. The lights dimmed. The waitstaff, holding LED-lit trays of meringue cakes over their heads, formed a conga line and began snaking around the tables to the song "Hot Hot." Someone with a microphone shouted, "Ladies and gentleman, get those napkins up!" And they did. Everybody in the dining room except Dina and I twirled their napkins in the air while singing along. *Olé, o-lé, olé, o-lé.* It was kind of silly, but I think the point was to make people feel they were a part of something bigger.

"Whether or not you believe me doesn't matter. Because ultimately I'm going to win the argument. You are not going to die, and some of us can get up from the dead."

The conspiracy community does the same thing. Its emotional power is much stronger than facts. It offers a worldview in which chaos, randomness, happenstance—the messy, frightening qualities of life that science depends upon and our minds find so hard to accept—simply do not exist. For some, a sinister reason for life's disappointments is more satisfying than no reason at all.

When we finally disembarked, after Dina and I had driven away, a team of special agents with the Internal Revenue Service arrived at the port and arrested Sean David Morton and his wife, Melissa, on fifty-six counts of fraud, including filing a false tax return that sought a refund of \$2,809,921. If convicted, the two face more than six hundred years in prison. (Both have pleaded not guilty.) A couple months later, Winston Shrout was indicted for allegedly printing more than \$1 *trillion* in fake financial documents. (He has also pleaded not guilty.) Len and Sherri returned to their home in Hawaii and wrote a long, angry blog post charging me with war crimes and claiming I was part of a top-secret cell of "Pharma Trolls." They also charged Larry, who tried to protect me, as being a double agent for Big Pharma.

Even then, I had a hard time feeling angry at Len.

"I had a brilliant mother who scrubbed the streets at Nazi gunpoint in Vienna," he revealed during one of his last panels, which I attended only after Adele's assurance that she would call security if the Horokane caused any more scenes. "By miracle my mother made it onto one of the last ships out of Europe. By a miracle I am sitting here today. My mother used to say, 'Lenny, you have no idea. Corporate fascism and neo-Nazism could arise at any time and anywhere, in any country.' And I said, 'Mom, I understand your pathology. You're neurotic. Had I been through what you went through, I certainly would feel the same way. You see Nazis everywhere. But I'm sorry, I can't go along with that agenda. I would recommend some good therapy.' "

Then Len's mother received the 1976 swine flu vaccine. After that, she developed Guillain-Barré syndrome, a disease that attacks the peripheral nervous system. She also developed uterine cancer. When she died, Len became convinced that the vaccine—which was linked to a small uptick in Guillain-Barré, according to the CDC—was responsible for her illness and subsequent death.

Len Horowitz saw something troubling in the world. When bad things happen without cause, some people turn to religion for comfort. Some look for a scientific reason. Some conclude that bad things happen and there's nothing we can do. Not Len. Len wanted a direct explanation. There had to be one. You just had to know where to look.

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Welfare cards carry number for sex line instead of help line

Staff and agencies in Lewiston Sunday 17 July 2016

theguardian.com

Holders of electronic benefits cards in Maine get a surprise when calling in to check their balances

Some holders of electronic benefits transfer cards in the US state of Maine have found that dialling the phone number on the back of the cards gets them a sex line instead of their balance.

A Maine government spokesman told the Sun Journal that officials were aware that the phone number on some welfare cards was off by one digit.

Li Langelier, of Lewiston, discovered the error when he went to check his EBT balance before going to the grocery store. What he got instead was a message welcoming him to "America's hottest talk line".

Langelier says he thought he'd misdialled but kept getting the same message when he called back.

The department said it planned to replace the misprinted cards and strengthen its review process to prevent future errors.

With Associated Press

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Terrified woman claims she saw an 8foot tall WEREWOLF walking on two legs

16:18, 29 Aug 2016 Updated 17:03, 29 Aug 2016 By Charlotte Owen

mirror.co.uk



Jemma Waller was terrified when she saw the 8 foot beast

A terrified woman says she saw an 8ft fanged " werewolf " walking on two legs down a country lane.

Jemma Waller, 24, said it was "like a big dog, - probably bigger than my car, but it had a human face."

Over the years, others claim to have seen the creature, known as Old Stinker.

Jemma, an animal-rescue worker, was driving with two friends in Halsham, East Yorks, when she spotted it.

She said: "This beast on all fours started to walk towards my car on two legs. It was like a horror movie."

Staff at a fuel station told them the story of the grey and cream stalker, that dates back to the 18th century.



Barmston Drain near Hull, East Yorks, where Jemma saw the creature with fangs

Jemma said: "It just made us more scared and I didn't get any sleep that night."

Hull city council has said it has no written policy on dealing with werewolves.

Mystery 'werewolf' creature terrifying families in Hull sparks major hunt

The creature started to walk towards Jemma's car

Witnesses have previously claimed to have seen the eight-foot "half-man, half-dog" creature -

dubbed the Beast of Barmston Drain - stalking land in nearby Hull.

Folklorists have since made the connection with the legend of Old Stinker, a werewolf said to stalk to Yorkshire Wolds.

"I looked on my driver's side and saw this beast on all fours that started to walk straight towards my car on two legs.

"It looked like a big dog, probably bigger than my car, but it had a human face. It also had this cream and grey fur.

"My automatic reaction was to keep on

driving, but thankfully it didn't keep coming towards me. It just turned around and ran off diagonally.



SWNS

Jemma said the creature had fangs

"Everyone in the car was really shaken. We'd never seen anything like that before."

Jemma wasn't sure what they had seen and she stopped the car at a nearby petrol station to calm down.

Concerned staff asked what was wrong and, after the friends explained that they had seen, they were told the story of the Beast of Barmston Drain.

Ms Waller said: "We had never heard about it before, but when we started reading up about it, it was exactly like what we saw.

"It just made us more scared to be honest and I didn't get any sleep that night. It was just like a horror movie."

Following a Freedom of Information Request submitted to Hull City Council last month, the authority revealed it has no written policy on dealing with werewolves.

Local resident Wayne Carr asked if a risk assessment had been "undertaken on Barmston Drain with regards to werewolves" and the council revealed it had no record of werewolf-related risk assessments and no secret stock of silver bullets locked away.

Sightings of "Old Stinker" are believed to date back to the 18th century when wolves still stalked the countryside.

In one report from the 1960s, a lorry driver said a creature had tried to smash its way through his windscreen as he drove along a remote Wolds road.

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Woman admits crickets, worms spilling on subway was a stunt

yahoo.com

AP August 27, 2016

Pres NEW YORK (AP) — A woman who caused chaos aboard a subway train by releasing a container of crickets and worms says it was all a prank.

Zaida Pugh tells the New York Post (http://nyp.st/2bn2eUc) she had the episode videotaped "to show what homeless people go through."

The NYPD says it's still looking into whether Wednesday's incident was staged and whether Pugh and the woman on the train are the same person. If so, she could face charges.

Pugh told the Post on Friday that a friend intentionally flipped the container over. She says the passengers attacking her also were part of the stunt.

Startled passengers had crickets on their arms and worms wriggled on the floor.

Someone pulled the emergency brake, halting the train for 30 minutes. Pugh says that wasn't planned.

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Woman in 'demon assassin' case found criminally insane in her children's deaths msn.com

The Washington Post Dan Morse 1 day ago



© Family Photo Zakieya Avery

A Maryland judge on Thursday ruled that Zakieya Avery, a 31-year-old woman who called herself a demon assassin, was criminally insane in 2014 when she killed her two youngest children during what she thought was an exorcism.

The ruling — holding that Avery was not criminally responsible for the crimes — means that she will be sent to a maximum-security psychiatric hospital. She earlier had admitted to killing her 18-monthold son Norell and her 2 1/2-year-old daughter Zyana, and trying to kill her 5-year-old daughter ,Taniya, and son Martello, 8.

The ruling came from Montgomery County Circuit Judge Terrence McGann who said "I find that Ms. Avery's ritualistic albeit barbaric attempt to rid her children of demons is powerful evidence of her lack of rational thinking."

McGann continued in court that he found that Avery "was methodical in her preparation and execution of her mission. The inescapable conclusion I draw is that she believed she was providing for her childrens' salvation. What rational normal-thinking human being could possibly conclude that their children would be better off dead than alive?"

The terrifying crimes — inside a townhouse in Germantown, and carried out by Avery with her roommate, Monifa Sanford — stunned the region and drew national attention. The two women were quickly taken into custody, and told detectives they'd come to believe the children had been taken over by demons and had to be killed to cleanse them of the demons so the children could go to heaven.

Those statements alone laid a groundwork for mental health issues that had to be sorted in the case.

In 2014, each woman was evaluated independently at the state's Clifton T. Perkins forensic psychiatric hospital in Jessup. The big legal questions turned on what their mental state was at the time of the crimes. Were they so delusional they didn't know their actions were wrong? And was their mental illness at that point so severe that it overran any rational thoughts the women may have had, leaving it impossible for them to "conform" their conduct "to the requirements of law."

The state doctors concluded Sanford failed both those tests. They designated her "not criminally responsible." A Montgomery judge agreed, and sent Sanford to confinement at Perkins.

The doctors reached a different conclusion for Avery, however, saying that she knew what she did was illegal because, among other factors, she took steps to evade consequences— by running out the back of her townhouse — after the crime.

Avery's attorney, Brian Shefferman, took exception to the opinion that Avery understand her actions were illegal.

At a court hearing Monday, Avery pleaded guilty to the crimes admitting she killed the children, but she said that mental illness made her not criminally responsible for the killings.

Her plea led to the trial in front of McGann, not a jury, for his ruling.

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Philippines drugs war: The woman who kills dealers for a living - BBC News

bbc.com



http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37172002



Maria, not her real name, is an assassin for hire.

Image copyright Carlo Gabuco

The Philippines is in the midst of a brutal war on drugs sanctioned by the controversial President Rodrigo Duterte, which has seen almost 2,000 killings in a matter of weeks. The BBC's Jonathan Head explores the country's dark underbelly of dealers and assassins through the story of one woman trapped in a chilling predicament.

When you meet an assassin who has killed six people, you don't expect to encounter a diminutive, nervous young woman carrying a baby.

"My first job was two years ago in this province nearby. I felt really scared and nervous because it was my first time."



Maria, not her real name, is an assassin for hire.

Image copyright Carlo Gabuco

Maria, not her real name, now carries out contract killings as part of the government-sanctioned war on drugs.

She is part of a hit team that includes three women, who are valued because they can get close to their victims without arousing the same suspicion a man would.

Since President Duterte was

elected, and urged citizens and police to kill drug dealers who resisted arrest, Maria has killed five more people, shooting them all in the head.

Media captionInside Manila's drug war: Female assassin's story

I asked her who gave the orders for these assassinations: "Our boss, the police officer," she said.

On the very afternoon we met, she and her husband had been told their safe house had been exposed. They were moving in a hurry.

This controversial drug war has brought her more work, but more risk too. She described how it began when her husband was commissioned to kill a debtor by a policeman - one who was also a drug pusher.



A man stick out his head outside his small window along with the tanggled electrical lines in Area A, Gate 5, Parola Tondo.

Image copyright Carlo Gabuco

"My husband was ordered to kill people who had not paid what they owed."

This turned into a regular commission for her husband until a more challenging situation cropped up.

"One time, they needed a woman... my husband tapped me to do the job. When I saw the man I was supposed to kill, I got near him and I shot him."



President Duterte came to power promising to crack down on crime and drugs

Image copyright Reuters Image caption

Maria and her husband come from an impoverished neighbourhood of Manila and had no regular income before agreeing to become contract killers. They earn up to 20,000 Philippines pesos (\$430; £327) per hit, which is shared between three or four of them. That is a fortune for low-income Filipinos, but now it looks as if Maria has no way out.

Contract killing is nothing new in the

Philippines. But the hit squads have never been as busy as they are now. President Duterte has sent out an unambiguous message.

Ahead of his election, he promised to kill 100,000 criminals in his first six months in office.

And he has warned drug dealers in particular: "Do not destroy my country, because I will kill you."

Last weekend he reiterated that blunt view, as he defended the extrajudicial killings of suspected criminals.

"Do the lives of 10 of these criminals really matter? If I am the one facing all this grief, would 100 lives of these idiots mean anything to me?"

Media captionThe BBC witnesses a drugs raid in one of Manila's biggest prisons

What has provoked the rough-tongued president to unleash this merciless campaign is the proliferation of the drug crystal meth or "shabu" as it is known in the Philippines. Cheap, easily

made, and intensely addictive, it offers an instant high, an escape from the filth and drudgery of life in the slums, a hit to get labourers in gruelling jobs like truck-driving through their day.

What is Shabu?



Sachets of shabu, or methamphetamine (middle-lower part), is pictured among other drugs paraphernalia at an undisclosed drug den in Manila, Philippines June 20, 2016

Image copyright Reuters

- Often called "ice" or "crystal meth" in the West, Shabu is the term used for a pure and potent form of amphetamine in the Philippines and other parts of Asia.
- Shabu costs about 1,000
 Philippines peso per gram (\$22; £16)
- It can be smoked, injected, snorted or dissolved in water
- The Philippines is home to industrial-scale labs producing tonnes of the drug which is then distributed throughout Asia.

Mr Duterte describes it as a pandemic, afflicting millions of his fellow citizens. It is also very profitable. He has listed 150 senior officials, officers and judges linked to the trade. Five police generals, he says, are kingpins of the business. But it is those at the lowest levels of the trade who are targeted by the death squads.

According to the police more than 1,900 people have been killed in drug-related incidents since he took office on 30 June. Of those, they say, 756 were killed by the police, all, they say, while resisting arrest. The remaining deaths are, officially, under investigation.

In practice most will remain unexplained. Nearly all those whose bloodied bodies are discovered every night in the slums of Manila and other cities are the poor - pedicab drivers, casual labourers, the unemployed. Often, found next to them are cardboard signs warning others not to get involved in drugs. This is a war being fought almost exclusively in the poorest parts of the country. People like Maria are used as its agents.

Duterte's war on drugs

Since 1 July

1,900

drug deaths

- 10,153 drug dealers arrested
- 1,160 deaths still being investigated
- 756 suspects killed by police

• 300 officers suspected of involvement

Source: Philippines National Police

AFP

But it is a popular war. In Tondo, the shantytown area next to Manila port, most of the residents applaud the president's tough campaign. They blamed the "shabu" scourge for rising crime, and for destroying lives, although some worried that the campaign was getting out of hand, and that innocent victims were being caught up in it.

One of those being hunted by the death squads is Roger - again not his real name.

He became addicted to shabu as a young man, he says, while working as a casual labourer. Like many addicts he began dealing to support his habit, as it was a more comfortable job than labouring. He worked a lot with corrupt police officers, sometimes taking portions of the drug hauls they confiscated in raids to sell.

Now he is on the run, moving from place to place every few days to avoid being tracked down and killed.

"Every day, every hour, I cannot get the fear out of my chest. It's really tiring and scary to hide all the time. You don't know if the person right in front of you will inform on you, or if the one facing you might be a killer. It's hard to sleep at night. One small noise, I wake up. And the hardest part of all is I don't know who to trust, I don't know which direction to go every day, looking for a place to hide."



A woman sweeping the front of her house in Happyland a dump site in Tondo, Manila

Image copyright Carlo Gabuco

He does feel guilt about his role in the trade of this destructive drug.

"I do truly believe that I have committed sins. Big time. I have done many awful things. I've wronged a lot people because they've become addicted, because I'm one of the many who sells them drugs. But what I can say is that not everyone who uses drugs is capable of committing those crimes, of stealing, and eventually killing. I'm also an addict but I don't kill. I'm an addict but I don't steal."

He has sent his children to live with his wife's family in the countryside, to try to stop them being exposed to the drug epidemic. He estimates that between 30% and 35% of people in his neighbourhood are addicts.

Image copyright Carlo Gabuco

So when President Duterte stated several times during his presidential campaign that he would kill drug dealers, throw their bodies into Manila Bay, did Roger not take that threat seriously?



A girl sleeping on the side of the street in Parola Tondo Area, Manila City



Many families living inside a warehouse beside a dumpsite in Happyland Tondo, Manila.



Homes in Tondo, Manila

"Yes, but I thought he would go after the big syndicates who manufacture the drugs, not the small time dealers like me. I wish I could turn the clock back. But it is too late for me. I cannot surrender, because if I do the police will probably kill me."

Image copyright Carlo Gabuco

Maria also regrets the choice she has made.

"I feel guilty and it is hard on my nerves. I don't want the families of those I have killed to come after me."

She worries about what her children will think. "I do not want them to come back at us and say that they got to live because we killed for money." Already her older boy asks questions about how she and her husband earn so much.

She has one more hit, one more contract to fulfill, and would like that to be her last. But her boss has threatened to kill anyone who leaves the team. She feels trapped. She asks her priest for forgiveness at confession in church, but does not dare to tell him what she does.

Image copyright Carlo Gabuco

Does she feel any justification carrying out President Duterte's campaign to terrorise the drug trade into submission?

"We only talk about the mission, how to carry it out," she says. "When it is finished we never talk about it again."

But she wrings her hands as she speaks and keeps her eyes shut tight, pursued by thoughts she does not want to share.

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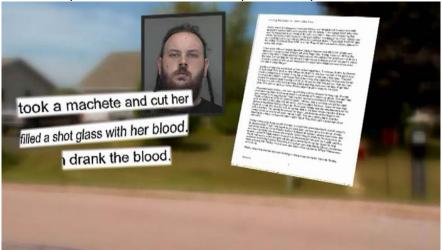
Image copyright JONATHAN HEAD

Woman's finger cut off in blood-drinking ritual

cbs5az.com



Posted: Sep 06, 2016 7:38 AM PDT Updated: Sep 07, 2016 6:20 AM PDT



A Wisconsin woman says she volunteered to have her pinky cut off and her arm cut open as Neuns told police she offered to let part of a blood-drinking ritual. (Source: WBAY/CNN)

A Wisconsin woman says she volunteered to have her pinky cut off and her arm cut open as part of a blood-drinking ritual. (Source: WBAY/CNN)

SUAMICO, WI (WBAY/CNN) - A Wisconsin man is facing charges after allegedly chopping off a woman's finger with a machete as part of a blood ritual.

Police say 27-year-old Shelby Neuns was talking to Jonathan Schrap and his two friends about blood-drinking rituals Saturday.

someone cut her arm and drink her

blood. She says Schrap used a machete to make a deep cut in her arm and then filled a shot glass with her blood and drank it.

Later, someone had the idea to cut off someone else's finger. Neuns says she was not using drugs or alcohol when she volunteered to have her pinky chopped off. She says Schrap used the machete to cleanly chop off her right pinky finger. He then put the finger in the freezer to cook and eat later, she told police.

When Neuns went to her boyfriend's house later that night, she showed him the injuries, and his mom made Neuns go to the emergency room. Staff at the hospital called the police because they believed Neuns had taken part in a cult initiation.

Police arrived to find Neuns agitated. She said she didn't want anyone to be charged because the ritual was voluntary.

However, police arrested Schrap and one of his friends, Nick Laabs. They tried to track down the other, a local rapper who goes by the name "Bloody Ruckus," but were unsuccessful.

Schrap will face a preliminary hearing Sept. 21 while Laabs was released after questioning and not charged.

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London's burning: Flaming model marks 350 years since Great Fire dailymail.co.uk



MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

London's burning AGAIN: 400ft long wooden model of the city goes up in flames on the Thames to commemorate 350 years since the **Great Fire**

 More than 13,000 houses and 87 churches were destroyed in the Great Fire of London of

September 1666

- Tonight an intricate 400ft long replica of the 17th century city was set on fire on a barge in the Thames
- Flames leapt several feet into the are as the fire consumed wooden buildings as it did 350 years ago

By Stephanie Linning for MailOnline

These breathtaking photographs show the moment an intricate replica of the city of London was set alight to commemorate 350 years since the Great Fire.

More than 13,000 houses and 87 churches were destroyed when the fire tore through the city over four days in September 1666.

At the time the walled inner city was a tightly-packed warren of winding, cobbled alleys crowded with timber framed buildings that were quickly consumed by the flames. By the end of the blaze, some 436 acres had been wiped out and London was forced to rebuild from the ashes.

Tonight the destruction and inspiring recovery was remembered in stunning fashion when the 400ft wooden sculpture was set on fire. Hundreds gathered on the banks of the Thames as the model was sailed out on to the Thames on a barge before it was set on fire in a dramatic retelling of the story of the Great Fire of London.

Flames leapt several feet into the air as the flames devastated the wooden buildings - just as they had 350 years ago. The spectacle is part of Great Fire 350, a series of events across the city to commemorate the anniversary.



London's burning: A 400ft long replica of the city of London was set alight as part of events to commemorate the Great Fire

Ablaze: Flames rose several feet above the structure, which was an exact model of London in 1666

Intricate: The wooden sculpture, which was designed by American artist David Best, before it was set on fire tonight

Hypnotising: A young boy watches from the banks of the Thames as the stunning



wooden replica is set on fire

Floating masterpiece: The model was transferred to a barge on the Thames were it was set alight on Sunday night

Blazing spectacle: The replica city was completely consumed by the fire, as the streets of London were 350 years ago

Mesmerising: Hundreds of spectators gathered on the banks of the river to watch as flames destroyed the model



Dramatic: Flames several feet high leapt into the air as the replica homes, shops and churches were destroyed

Moving: The event remembers the devastation caused by the fire - and how the city was





The comments below have not been moderated.

Blue Cat, Adelaide South Australia, 9 minutes ago

What a horrible, disgusting and very odd way to commemorate the Great Fire of London. Horrendous.



Kane, perth, Australia, 11 minutes ago

just a hunka hunka o burning Love ---

Esther4Gd, Ohio, United States, 25 minutes ago

what an absolute WASTE of lumber, SHAME on YOU, SHAME

Maggie, Oxford, United Kingdom, 35 minutes ago



Part of MY country's history. Tired of being told we can't commemorate English history lest migrants and the children of migrants are offended.

onlineve, London, United Kingdom, 35 minutes ago

Couldn't we have used Luton instead?

Far Queue, knowhere, United Kingdom, about an hour ago

I see the American loudmouths are out in force again, pretty rich coming from a country that it is impossible to turn on the TV without seeing something or someone being shot to ribbons or blown to smithereens, the hypocrisy is rife.

Richard, Poole Dorset, United Kingdom, about an hour ago

What a total waste of man power time and resources.



popsie 500, Romford, United Kingdom, about an hour ago

They sure know how to waste money.

Meh..., Virginia, United States, about 2 hours ago

Burning Man lite.

herta bothe, London, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

Were there no m0s,q. ues they could have burned?

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Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe moved from Broadmoor to Frankland Prison

metro.co.uk

Richard Hartley-Parkinson for Metro.co.ukThursday 25 Aug 2016 11:53 am



Serial Killer Peter Sutcliffe has been moved to a mainstream prison (Picture: Express Newspapers)

Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe has been moved out of Broadmoor psychiatric hospital and into Frankland Prison.

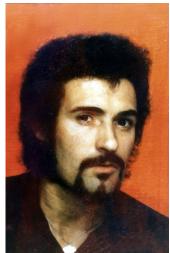
Sutcliffe, 70, has spent 32 years inside the highsecurity institution in Berkshire after murdering 13 women and attempting to kill seven more between 1976 and 1981.

Plans for his transfer emerged earlier in August and The Sun reported that he had been moved on

Wednesday.

Sutcliffe, who has been in Broadmoor since 1984 after he was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia following his life sentence in 1981, will continue to have his mental health assessed in prison and could be returned to a psychiatric hospital if there is a change in his condition.

It has been estimated that the move will save the taxpayer hundreds of thousands of pounds.



He's spent 32 years at Broadmoor

Dr Ruth Tully, a consultant forensic psychologist at the University of Nottingham, said cost would not have been a factor in the ruling that the serial killer is sane enough to be transferred but that the cost difference was considerable.

Figures show that it costs around £325,000 per year to keep a patient in Broadmoor, compared with around £45,000 per year in a category A prison.

Sutcliffe, a former lorry driver from Bradford, now calls himself Peter Coonan. Most of his victims were prostitutes who were mutilated and beaten to death.

He is now being detained at Frankland Prison (Picture: Alamy)

He was given 20 life terms for the murders and was caught when police found him with a prostitute in his car.

They became suspicious and found he had a fake licence plate and weapons including a screwdriver and hammer in the boot.

Before he was moved to Broadmoor, the killer spent three years at Parkhurst prison on the Isle of Wight.



A Prison Service spokeswoman said: 'We do not comment on individuals.'

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Confused teenage girl found with 'satanic symbols' carved on her arms

12:17, 10 Aug 2016 Updated 13:43, 10 Aug 2016 By Kara O'Neill

mirror.co.uk



Girl suspected of dabbling in the occult after she's found with 'satanic symbols' carved into her Witnesses described how the girls hands

A 'disorientated' young teenager has sparked concern after being found wandering the streets in the middle of the night with 'satanic symbols' carved into her arm and hands.

The girl is suspected of dabbling in the occult after she was discovered by terrified locals.

The 13-year-old was found on a street, reportedly in Chiriza, Nicaragua, although residents believe the girl and her family are originally from Cuba.

and arms were scratched and cut with

the imprint of satanic symbols.



Canal 10

Witnesses gather by a house near to where the girl was found

One resident told Canal 10: "We stopped her, but it was very strange. She seemed to have been playing some strange game. I think she's from Cuba, she's not from this village."

They added: "I ask myself, what problem does she have in her house?

Residents were terrified after finding the girl wandering the streets

"It's up to the parents to pay attention to the children. This is truly the fault of the parents."

Neighbours called police, who found the girl wearing a blue and white school uniform.

They later returned her to her home.

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Canal 10

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Zimbabwean pipers ready for the World Pipe Band Championships - BBC News bbc.com





Zimbabwean pipers ready for the World Pipe Band Championships

12 August 2016 Last updated at 18:18 BST

Piping bands from around the world have gathered in Glasgow for the World Pipe Band Championships.

Drummers and pipers from St John's College Pipe Band hope to be well-placed when the results are announced on Saturday.

Piping tutor and player Jonathan Kalonga says the band have had tips on how to play in the inclement summer weather.

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Zombie knife sellers to face prison after 'horrific' weapons are banned - BelfastTelegraph.co.uk

belfasttelegraph.co.uk Published 15/08/2016

Belfast Teleg



Dangerous: a zombie knife

Dangerous: a zombie knife

Sellers of so-called zombie knives will face jail from this week as a ban on the "horrific" weapons comes into force.

Ministers in England and Wales have launched a crackdown on the blades. which can be up to two foot-long with a serrated edge and carry images or words that glamorise violence.

The new law won't apply in Northern Ireland - but it is understood that

legislation is also expected to be introduced by Stormont.

Inspired by horror films and often advertised as collectors' items, they are available on the internet for as little as £10.

An amendment to the Criminal Justice Act 1988 prohibiting the sale, manufacture, rental or importation of zombie knives will take effect on Thursday.

Those caught making or selling the items will face up to four years in prison.

Last month, Justice Minister Claire Sugden said was considering tougher knife crime sentences after the number of murders involving stabbings doubled within a year.

Ms Sugden told the Assembly that during the past year there had been eight killings that involved knives or sharp instruments. There were just three the previous year.

The minister said that while current knife crime penalties were stringent, she would think about making them even tougher in a bid to reverse the rise.

Safeguarding minister Sarah Newton said today: "This Government will act wherever necessary to cut crime and keep our communities safe.

"Zombie killer knives glamorise violence and cause devastating damage - they have no place whatsoever in our society."

Alf Hitchcock, lead on knife crime at the National Police Chiefs' Council, said: "Zombie knives are absolutely horrific weapons.

"Forces are determined to reduce the harm caused by these and all other dangerous weapons. There is no place for knife crime within society and this ban is further commitment to keeping communities safe."

Morris Bright, of the Local Government Association, said: "Zombie knives have only one purpose to threaten, injure or kill someone - and this ban, which the LGA has called for, will help reduce the number of lethal blades in society and stop online retailers unwittingly fuelling criminal activity which can lead to tragedy.

"An industry-backed code of practice on the naming, promotion and packaging of all knives also needs to be created - something similar to that of the alcoholic drinks industry - which would promote their responsible sale."

Belfast Telegraph © Belfast Telegraph

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Amid LAX Panic, Zorro Appears And Police Freak Out

huffingtonpost.com

As if the night wasn't crazy enough.

08/29/2016 06:33 am ET

Ron DickerGeneral Assignment Reporter, The Huffington Post

Zorro appeared during the evacuation at Los Angeles International Airport on Sunday night, and he didn't receive a hero's welcome.

Instead, officers with guns drawn ordered the unidentified man, who was dressed in a Zorro costume complete with plastic sword, to get down on the ground.

LAX confirmed that the man had been apprehended.

The man was reportedly just an actor in the wrong place at the very wrong time. He told CBS in Los Angeles that he had just come from an audition and was waiting for his ride. He didn't have time to change out of his costume, the station said.

"The next thing I know, [the police are] all over me," he said.

Next time, dude, put away the getup.

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